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CONTENTS

	PAGE
EVENTS OF THE WEEK	735
ATTEND TO COAL AND COTTON!	738
LORD OXFORD. By Ramsay Muir	739
A POINCARÉ PLEBISCITE. By Robert Dell	740
LIFE AND POLITICS. By Kappa	741
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: The Faversham Election (J. Freeman Dunn); The Education of Mr. Chamberlain (Florence A. Keynes); "Liberals" in the House of Commons (W. M. Crook); The Outlawry of War (Harrison Brown); "East and West" (T. W. Douglas James); Italian Rule in the Tyrol (Luigi Villari); "The Forward View" (Elliott Dodds); "Books for Boys" (Geo. W. Alcock); Dante Gabriel Rossetti (S. N. Ghose); The London Hospital—Quinquennial Year (Viscount Knutsford)	742-745
AN IMAGINARY CONFERENCE. By One of the Unorthodox	746
THE CONTEMPORARY ART SOCIETY'S LOAN EXHIBITION. By Roger Fry	747
PLAYS AND PICTURES. By Omicron	748
THE MISSEL-THRUSH. Poem by A. J. Young	749
A HUNDRED YEARS AGO: THE ATHENÆUM, FEBRUARY 19TH, 1828	749
THE WORLD OF BOOKS:— Who Are the Criminals? By Leonard Woolf	751
REVIEWS:— Fiction. By Edwin Muir	752
The Problem of the Friars. By Eileen Power	753
The First International. By T. H. Marshall	754
A Danish Author	754
Woodrow Wilson. By Haslam Mills	756
Evolution	756
Japan, Ancient and Modern. By Edmund Blunden	758
ON THE EDITOR'S TABLE	758
THE OWNER-DRIVER. By Rayner Roberts	760
FINANCIAL SECTION:— The Week in the City	762

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EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE Liberal victory at Lancaster, representing as it did a turnover of some 3,000 votes from Tory to Liberal, with a practically stationary Labour poll, was a noteworthy event. The circumstances of the election made its result, in large measure, a personal triumph for Mr. Lloyd George. So far as can be judged, it seems probable that Mr. Tomlinson, who was a popular candidate, would have won the seat, even if there had been no letter from Lord Ashton. But no one questions that his majority was increased as the result of that letter and of Mr. Lloyd George's reply. And the fact that an attack, which made Mr. Lloyd George's personality a leading issue in the election, proved so undoubtedly

a boomerang is a complete answer to the suggestion of the TIMES that "the best hopes of the Liberal revival seem to lie in swift and determined escape from a fatal personal encumbrance."

* * *

The Report of the Liberal Industrial Inquiry figured prominently in the debates on the Address in the House of Commons. Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister, in an interjection, volunteered his opinion that the Report "contains all the disadvantages and none of the advantages of Socialism"; but it was significant that the more common line of Tory and Labour speakers was to claim it as plagiarism of their ideas. This tendency reached an absurd length when a Labour member interrupted Mr. Lloyd George as he was expounding the idea of an Economic General Staff, with the question, "Is this a new idea or is it borrowed?" Mr. Lloyd George justly retorted:—

"What does it matter? That is the sort of silly interruption we get. We cannot approach a great problem in this House in the spirit of children, saying, 'You have stolen my marbles'."

Is it seriously suggested that it is improper for the Report to include any proposals which have been made by anyone before? It was certainly not in that spirit that the authors of the Report set about their work. As a matter of fact the idea of an Economic General Staff was first advocated by Sir William Beveridge in an article in this journal. It is, of course, true that most of its leading ideas have long been advocated by representative Liberals, and that many of them have found support among intelligent members of other parties. It may be suggested, however, that the Report has often given these ideas a new coherence and finish.

* * *

We can feel some sympathy, however, with Mr. Robert Boothby and Captain Macmillan in bringing the charge of "plagiarism" on behalf of the book "Industry and the State," in which they and certain others of the Y.M.C.A. school of Tories, a year or two ago, indicated an attitude of general enlightenment on industrial problems which is far from congenial to their party. They have received less credit for this book than they deserve; their efforts to leaven the lump of Toryism have been heartbreakingly unsuccessful; and it is easy to see that the adoption by the Liberal Party of the policy defined in the Industrial Report will place them in a position of some embarrassment. Mr. Boothby's speech was indeed a remarkable feature of last week's debates. He denounced the policy of the coal-owners in "undercutting at any cost" as "senseless" and "wrong and stupid." He urged the need for drastic reconstruction of the basic industries, and for international agreements. He argued that "some pressure will have to be put on the coal-owners to reorganize," that, as a last resort, the Government might exercise this pressure by *ad hoc* legislation, but

that "a far better way would be through the banks." It is obvious that there must be something very arbitrary about party alignments which place Mr. Boothby and his friends in the Conservative Party.

* * *

The Committee on Arbitration and Security set up by the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament at the bidding of the last League Assembly is to meet again on Monday. It will have before it three memoranda, on arbitration, security, and certain Articles of the Covenant, prepared by M. Holsti, M. Politis, and M. Rutgers, in accordance with instructions given at its first meeting in December. These memoranda have now been issued from Geneva, with an introduction by the Chairman of the Committee, Dr. Benes, in agreement with the three *rapporteurs*. The whole subject is full of thorns. There is, for example, the danger that security talk may be used to postpone any serious attempt to limit armaments; the danger that States may undertake obligations which they will be unable, or unwilling, when a crisis comes, to fulfil; and the danger that hostile alliances may be formed under the guise of security-pacts. Those who believe most firmly in League principles will therefore watch the proceedings of the Security Committee with some uneasiness, and they will not be altogether reassured by a study of the documents which have been prepared for its consideration.

* * *

Dr. Benes's introduction is, in the main, a soothing document, tending to show that the Covenant works extremely well as it stands, and that there is no great need to add to the security which it provides:—

"The Articles of the Covenant are capable of being applied in such a way that, in the majority of cases, they can prevent war. The Council has shown during the last few years that it has power to arrest a conflict. The responsible representatives of the States Members of the Council are equipped by the terms of the Covenant with extensive powers for the preservation of international peace. Their common will for peace can be exercised effectively within the framework of the Covenant—all the more effectively because that instrument does not provide any rigid code of procedure for the settlement of international crises."

This is a somewhat unexpected but very welcome opinion from so strong a supporter of the Protocol as Dr. Benes; and no less welcome is his conclusion that,

"a situation has arisen which is fundamentally different from that which existed before the League of Nations was instituted, so that a resort to war, without the responsibility for such a step being manifest to the whole world, becomes more and more difficult to imagine."

* * *

So optimistic is Dr. Benes as to the power of the League to avert a war even in the event of the Council failing to reach a unanimous report under Article 15, that it seems unnecessary for him to add, as he does, a recommendation to "States in search of more effective guarantees" the conclusion of "special or collective treaties of arbitration and security." It is true that in asking other members of the League to give "moral support" to such treaties, Dr. Benes predicates that they shall be "conceived in the spirit of the Covenant of the League and co-ordinated within its provisions," but we should like to feel sure that he interprets that spirit as it was conceived by the makers of the Covenant. A reference to the Memorandum by M. Politis is not reassuring on this point. Here it is stated that,

"there are now in force eighty-five treaties of conciliation or arbitration . . . most of which embody the ideas advocated by the League. . . . There are fifteen treaties of political co-operation not amounting to alliances or guarantees; there are three agreements establishing neutral zones; and there are fifteen separate treaties of guarantee in the form of alliances, military agreements, or pacts of friendship and co-operation. . . ."

This is to throw together in one heap agreements of all kinds, some harmless and even helpful, others hostile to the main principle of the League, if not actually illegal under the Covenant. Nowhere in these documents can we find it clearly stated that an alliance against a third party is the direct opposite of the League idea.

* * *

American public opinion is notoriously slow in swinging to its moorings, but there are signs that it is at last grasping the significance of the Navy Bill. Criticism has fastened upon one very important point. Is the programme that Congress will shortly be asked to approve to be a programme of replacement and renewal, or of pure expansion? The method of granting the appropriations can make it either the one or the other. The Navy Department have not satisfied public opinion that the fleet, as now constituted, is numerically inadequate to its duties, and while the critics are ready to discuss the desirability of replacing particular units and types by more efficient ships, they are extremely sceptical as to the wisdom of expansion. The main point at issue, therefore, is the length of time over which the proposed expenditure shall be spread, and this issue is complicated by still wider considerations. An important section of American opinion, including the President himself, regards the programme mainly as a lever for enforcing attention to armament limitation. Those who hold this view are willing to pass the programme, but wish to delay its execution, and hope that substantial modifications may be possible as a result of the Conference in 1931. The Big Navy Group, on the other hand, can tolerate the idea of limitation only as a means of securing nominal parity and actual predominance to the United States. The important thing to remember is that the two groups are, at present, fairly evenly balanced, and that which ultimately triumphs will depend mainly on whether the British people and the British Government can convince America, during the next three years, that they are sincere in desiring an effective measure of naval limitation, and are prepared, if need be, even to make sacrifices to this end.

* * *

The violent language used by M. Poincaré in his speech at Strasbourg on Sunday about the Alsatian Home Rulers was very significant, both because it is not his habit to be violent in words and because it was calculated. He wrote the speech, as usual, and its text was sent out to the Press before it was delivered. Clearly it was Germany that M. Poincaré attacked through the Home Rulers. He represented the Home Rule movement as one of German origin, the aim of which was the separation of Alsace-Lorraine from France. Yet the Alsatian deputies, whom M. Poincaré declared, no doubt with truth, to be all "animated by the same love for France," almost unanimously demanded "administrative autonomy" in a resolution presented by them to the Chamber, and M. Poincaré was obliged to intervene to induce them to postpone its discussion. The speech was a refusal to entertain the idea of any modification of the existing French centralized system, and the Press comments on it show that M. Poincaré represents in this matter the views of all French parties, except the Communists. Indeed

the Radicals and the Socialists are the most opposed to any concessions, and the *ERE NOUVELLE* declares the solution to be the immediate repeal of such German legislation as has been allowed to continue, and the complete assimilation of Alsace-Lorraine to the rest of France in every respect. Sooner or later, no doubt, the French will learn, as we learned in regard to Ireland, that repressive measures are futile in such cases, but it may be only after a bitter experience.

* * *

One sentence in M. Poincaré's speech had a particularly ominous ring. Alsace, he said, had long since "ratified the celebrated phrase of the Latin historian: *Germani trans Rhenum incolunt*." Surely, when M. Poincaré wrote his speech, he must have weighed these words and recognized that they were capable of a sinister interpretation. Seeing how he has been identified with the traditional policy of separating from Germany all the territory on the Left Bank of the Rhine, he would have been wiser to avoid any remark that might give even a suggestion that he has not abandoned the policy embodied in the Franco-Russian agreement of February, 1917, about the future peace terms, in his own reply to the Austrian Emperor's peace proposals in the same year, and in the Dariac Report in 1922.

* * *

General Groener, the new German Minister of Defence, has made a good beginning. In his speech before the Budget Commission of the Reichstag, he made a statement on the military duties of the Reichswehr, and the military policy of the Defence Ministry, which must impress everybody who has any knowledge of military affairs. As at present constituted, the Reichswehr can only "defend the frontiers in order to assure German neutrality in times of political tension." As the frontiers are long, an army of 100,000 men can only carry out these duties if it possesses the greatest possible mobility; this is the real reply to insinuations based on expenditure on mechanical transport for the German Army. Technically, the argument is absolutely sound. Violations of neutrality are generally incursions rather than invasions, and come from unexpected directions. A nation like Germany, with no mobile reserve or mobile garrisons behind its frontier posts, can only protect itself from such incursions by giving great mobility to its field force. When he spoke of political questions affecting the Reichswehr discipline, General Groener gave an emphatic endorsement to the President's attitude. Soldiers must be the faithful servants of the Government that pays them.

* * *

While his nominee has been making an excellent impression in the Reichstag, the President himself has been working hard to keep the coalition together. Public education is a question upon which people generally hold strong views, and the Germans, with their genuine respect for learning, are exceptionally tenacious of their opinions. The People's Party and the Centre are in hot dispute about a clause some ten lines long in a draft Education Bill. Both sides would rather provoke a general election than abandon their contentions. President von Hindenburg has written a letter to Herr Marx, the Chancellor, to remind him that, if the Government dissolves, the country will lose the benefit of legislation upon which all parties are agreed. This legislation includes two measures in which the President is known to be interested, a war compensation Bill and a Bill for the relief of peasant farmers. Little hope of saving the coalition now remains, but the Cabinet is endeavouring to reach a compromise with the

opposition by which the non-contentious legislation may be passed before the dissolution.

* * *

The processes of reorganization to which the Kuomintang has recently subjected itself are mysterious to a degree: the outcome is, however, very apparent. Chiang Kai-shek has reappeared as the Kuomintang commander-in-chief. He promises continued hostilities against the Northern Tuchuns, and a reform of the administration in the southern provinces. Both terms are very elastic when translated into modern Chinese. For the rest, Chiang now asserts that if the Powers do not accept the Kuomintang terms, he will denounce all existing treaties. At the same time he is credibly reported to be contemplating a restoration of foreign control over the salt gabelle—the revenues from which have been plundered right and left by local authorities—and to be willing to come to terms with the foreign controllers of the Maritime Customs, and even to agree to some three-cornered arrangement on tariffs with the Powers and the Northern Government. The solid fact behind Chiang Kai-shek's rhetoric seems to be that the Nanking Government really desires to come to an agreement with the Powers, and is trying to offer, as a *quid pro quo* for treaty revision, a civil administration capable of enforcing the agreement.

* * *

The appointment of the Prince of Wales as "Master of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets" is a graceful acknowledgment of the national debt, both in peace and in war, to the officers and men of the Mercantile Marine. The laborious and often hazardous nature of their calling, and its peculiar importance in the national economy, make it fitting that its position as a national service should thus be recognized. The announcement will be the more widely welcomed because of the emphatic assurance that it has no military significance and covers no design for giving a military status to the Merchant Navy. Projects for closer association of the Mercantile Marine with the Navy, and for placing it, in some degree, under Admiralty control, were very rife just after the war; but, as recent discussions in America remind us, a policy which regards merchant shipping mainly as a second line of defence is both ruinous to shipping as an industry and peculiarly provocative of international friction and suspicion. It was a happy thought to associate this tribute to the men of the merchant service with an express repudiation of such a policy.

* * *

All who came in contact with Mr. Trevelyan Thomson will deeply regret his death. From members of all parties at the House of Commons come appreciation of his loyal, sincere, indefatigable spirit. The increasing complexity of modern social problems makes conscientious Members of Parliament among the most overworked persons in the community. Mr. Thomson was untiring in calling attention to the problems of the necessitous areas; he would have been delighted by the new prominence which is being given to the relief of rates; and yet he voluntarily added to his many duties by taking a leading part in humane legislation for animals. He had, in 1921, the rare honour for a private member of carrying to the Statute Book the opposed Importation of Plumage (Prohibition) Act, and assisted in the amendment of his Act last session. He combined shrewdness and hard-headedness with imaginative insight—for what has Middlesbrough to do with Birds of Paradise? The House of Commons, Liberalism, and the humane movement, have suffered a great loss.

ATTEND TO COAL AND COTTON !

THE state of industry was, very properly, the principal theme of the debates on the Address. We may note with satisfaction how very general has become the acceptance of the diagnosis of our economic troubles which we have striven in this journal for some years past to press upon the public mind. In a series of articles in 1926, we showed that our heavy unemployment represents an essentially different phenomenon from an ordinary general trade depression, likely soon to pass away; that in fact there is no longer a general trade depression, most lines of our economic activity showing considerable expansion and prosperity; that the problem with which we are confronted is that of a serious decline in our old-established, exporting industries, representing a shifting of our economic life from one sort of equilibrium to another. We argued that "to organize and to direct that transition is to-day the central task of economic statesmanship"; and we urged, in particular: (1) the need for relieving local rates which "throw the heaviest burdens on the worst-hit industries, and operate as a powerful deterrent to the selection of a 'black spot' as the site for a new factory"; (2) the desirability of increasing the mobility of labour by establishing training centres, like those set up at Birmingham and elsewhere; (3) the importance of pressing forward, instead of hanging back, with the work of national development; (4) the importance of reconstruction in the depressed industries themselves, where "employers must somehow contrive to maintain efficiency, financial prosperity, and a good standard of living for their workpeople in a new environment of comparatively stagnant, or perhaps even diminishing, demand."

Most of this appears now to be common ground in the House of Commons, and to commend itself, at least in general terms, to our present Ministers. Both Mr. Baldwin and Mr. Churchill spoke in the strongest terms of the mischievous effects of heavy local rates in the depressed areas. Let us quote Mr. Churchill:—

"If you look at those places where you have your necessitous areas, you see that they are places specially adapted for industry. Why go off into the ploughed fields, far from any at present constructed line of communication and unprovided with any housing accommodation? Why go there to construct new industries, when you have in these necessitous areas a population that seeks to work, with their institutions, and with all the necessities of sanitation, and so forth, that are required? Those are the places where industry ought to thrive. It does not thrive; it flies from those areas, because the burden of rates is destructive, and because in the distress which follows in those derelict areas there grows up a spirit of strife and bad will which add to the aversion of industry to go near them, and so it moves off outside the boundaries to any district where it can find a new situation. Whether you look at the burden upon the productive industries, or whether you look at the condition of these necessitous areas, you will find that the rates are a most serious and vicious feature."

How true! And how disappointing after this impassioned eloquence, and after the reference to the relief of rates in the King's Speech, to find that it is very doubtful if our Ministers mean to do anything about the matter after all! There are a great many questions, Mr. Churchill explained, which must first be answered, and he gave quite a formidable list, and,

above all, there is the question of money. The relief of rates must wait until the Treasury has a surplus to play with, and Mr. Churchill's experience of surpluses has not been fortunate.

"Therefore," he proceeded, "I say, until I can speak with tolerable certainty about the finances, no undertaking of any kind can be given, and no hope—I hope this will be written down that it may be used afterwards; I hope it may be used in evidence for me—even the most modest and most timid, ought to be indulged in by anyone."

No undertaking, and no hope, not even the most modest and timid! Well, we have written it down that it may be used afterwards. But what is the point of the reference in the King's Speech unless it is meant to encourage hopes? What really are we to make of the attitude of Ministers on this matter? In his first Budget, Mr. Churchill found himself with a large surplus to dispose of—a surplus which would have been more than sufficient to remove from the rates the whole burden of the outdoor relief of the able-bodied, as proposed in the Liberal Industrial Report. But he preferred to use it to reduce the income tax. Well, doubtless the deterrent effects of heavy rates in the depressed areas have become more apparent in the interval; and the Government's intention to make the relief of rates the first charge on future Budget surpluses—for that is what it comes to—is welcome, so far as it goes. But surely the fervour of the Ministerial language calls for a more determined attitude; surely it would be desirable to face, if need be, even the unpleasant possibility of higher national taxation in order to relieve a burden which Mr. Baldwin describes as "killing," and which Mr. Churchill has declared to be much more prejudicial to industry than the income tax. Unfortunately, our Ministers appear to desire the palm without the dust.

Mr. Baldwin, in his general review of the industrial position, showed, as indeed he has shown before, an understanding of the general nature of the problem which confronts us:—

"It becomes increasingly clear," he observed, "that the problem is not so much one of artificially stimulating the few industries that are suffering so much to-day as it is of making transference easy and of going on more energetically than ever with the provision of new houses in those parts of the country where the new industries are settling, so as on that side to make the transference when it comes desirable and easy."

What action can be expected from the present Government, with these ends in view, is another matter. Mr. Baldwin can fairly claim that the appointment, however belated, of the Industrial Transference Board shows that the Government are not altogether unmindful of their responsibilities. He promised in his speech to "speed up" the development of training centres. And one can perhaps discern in the last half of the passage which we have quoted signs of a recognition of the importance of pressing forward with the work of national development. These are faint though more promising indications than any that we have had before that Ministers may be groping their way towards the right sort of economic policy. But the slow movement of their minds lags deplorably in the rear of the growing urgency of the problems themselves.

At the present moment, however, public attention needs, we think, to be directed to problems of a different character. The position of the coal and cotton industries is becoming increasingly serious. In both

industries there have recently been grave developments—developments which are prejudicial to the chances of industrial peace, and which raise questions of general principle of the utmost importance. The American section of the Master Cotton Spinners have decided, it appears, to press to an issue their demands for lower wages and longer hours. In the coalfields of Northumberland and Durham, the chairmen of the Wages Boards, who under the agreements in force are in the position of arbitrators, have decreed drastic wage-cuts, which would reduce the wages of most of the hewers to little more than their pre-war level in terms of money, although in those districts, it should be remembered, the hours of work are now longer than they were before the war.

Upon the demands of the Cotton Spinners we have expressed ourselves in plain language on previous occasions. We desire to urge now that the issue is not one which can be treated as the domestic affair of the cotton trade concerning no one else. Prolonged labour conflict, such as would be required to induce the operatives to agree to longer hours, would finally extinguish any chance the cotton trade may have of recovering lost markets, it would throw back the whole movement towards better industrial relations, it would upset most seriously our balance of trade with far-reaching reactions on our whole economic life. Yet the danger must now be taken seriously. We must reckon with the desperation of the Master Spinners, losing money steadily week after week, seeing no end to it as matters are drifting, conscious that a stoppage would at least stop their losses and enable them to reap a profit on their stocks. Such conditions put men in a mood to plunge recklessly. The Master Spinners cannot be accepted to-day as trustworthy custodians of the permanent interests of their industry.

A strong moral obligation rests, in our view, upon the Government in this matter. If the Washington Hours Convention had been ratified, a forty-eight-hour week would be established by law, and it would be impossible for the cotton employers to put forward their present hours demand. The Government has not ratified the Washington Convention, but Ministers have repeatedly insisted—Mr. Baldwin did so at length on Monday—that they have only been restrained from doing so by certain technical difficulties of interpretation, and that they are wholehearted supporters of the principle. If Ministers are sincere in these professions, they cannot stand by and see this principle violated in one of our leading industries. It will not do for them to plead impotence. It would be perfectly feasible and proper, as a last resort, to pass a special Act, establishing the present working hours in the cotton industry as a legal maximum. In our view, the intervention of the Government should go further. It should extend to insisting on the effective reorganization of the industry. There is no lack, as the recent Report of the Joint Committee of Cotton Trade Organizations shows, of constructive minds and constructive schemes in Lancashire. Nor is support for such schemes lacking. The difficulty is to secure the necessary degree of unanimity to carry any of them out on a purely voluntary basis. In our view, the establishment of a new Cotton Control Board, representative of all interests in the industry, operatives as well as employers and merchants, and armed with suitable compulsory powers, does not go beyond the requirements of the situation. Drift, as we can now see, is highly dangerous. The idea that the problem must solve itself in the end through the process of bankruptcy is unduly optimistic. Before facing bankruptcy, men will take any disastrous plunge.

In the coalfields, there is no immediate likelihood

of dramatic labour conflict. But there is the prospect, which should appal us more, of a slow, pitiless degradation of the standards of life, carried to a point which may seriously affect health, physique, morale. The decisions of the arbitrators in Northumberland and Durham will mean that the hewers, that is to say, the more skilled grades, will receive for a full week's work (and there is much short time) something round about £2. What is to be the attitude of the general public towards this development? Are we just to shrug our shoulders, and say "We are sorry for the miners; but there is no help for it. The industry is in a bad way. The collieries are losing money; they must get labour costs down to enable them to carry on." That, in effect, is the attitude of the arbitrators. But along this crazy road of over-production, price-cutting, and wage-cutting, where is the end to be? Is the tragedy of the handloom weavers to be re-enacted in the coalfields? We are witnessing the effects of that policy of "adventure," of "fighting it out with competitors, wherever found, in the spirit of courage and daring," commended by Sir Adam Nimmo in the *OBSERVER* last July. Let the Government, and the public generally, give heed to the matter, for the responsibility of both is grave.

LORD OXFORD

By RAMSAY MUIR.

ASQUITH is dead; and it is as if a monument had fallen. For there was a monumental quality in this great man, a granitic strength, firmness, and dignity.

He had a splendid career, in which, from first to last, there was nothing small or mean. He played his part in stupendous events, and was not dwarfed or overwhelmed by them. But it is not upon his record or achievements that one is tempted, at this moment, to dwell; but rather upon the essential greatness of the man. It is a word not to be lightly used. But no one who came into contact with him, however slightly, could fail to recognize the authentic note of greatness: it penetrated even the clouds of controversy and the miasma of misrepresentation, and was felt by the whole nation.

His intellectual power was always apparent, from his Balliol days onwards; and in a very unusual degree it had been strengthened by the classic discipline, which entered into his very fibres. In all the long roll of English statesmen, none has been more Roman than Asquith, though none, also, has been more English. His strength, clarity, balance and integrity of intellect, rather than inventiveness, ingenuity or suppleness were his distinguishing qualities: his mind was massive and nimble at the same time. With this went a large generosity, quick to welcome without jealousy new ideas whencesoever they might come, to review them in the light of his steady sanity, to take a full share of responsibility for accepting them, and to give all the credit to the initiator. Beyond all things, he was steadfast and loyal: *vir tenax propositi*; unperturbed by calumny, to which he disdained reply; incredibly patient and magnanimous; serene in adversity and untouched by the intoxication of triumph; steady when the world reeled; incapable of deserting any who had trusted him, or of shirking responsibility. It may be that he even carried the virtue of loyalty too far; it was traded upon. He could live the life of a politician without self-advertisement; could feel deeply and conceal his feelings from the world; and in all the glare of public life, could keep his own soul apart.

In many of his most distinctive qualities he was profoundly English; unless an exception be made for Sir Robert Peel, whom in some ways he resembled more

nearly than any other British statesman, he was perhaps the most thoroughly English of our modern Prime Ministers. He had the Englishman's deep reserve and unwillingness to display his feelings; the Englishman's instinctive dislike of extremes and distaste for over-statement; the Englishman's concentration upon the practical needs of to-morrow, and reluctance to look very far ahead.

He was a Liberal by instinct, in every fibre of his being; but he was also a Whig by natural sympathy, and a Radical by intellectual conviction. He brought into the twentieth century the fine and dignified political tradition of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in which he was steeped. If he did not readily adjust himself to the strange new conditions of the post-war world, this was not unnatural: his mind and outlook had been formed in the Gladstonian era, he was old and wearied with great tasks, and he could not welcome with any eagerness the problems of the new age. Yet his Paisley speeches showed that his strong mind could perceive the novelty and magnitude of these problems, and face them with the courage of a Radical, though without ardour. While his preference was for the modes of the past, he was far indeed from sharing the negative and narrowly traditional view of Liberalism which one school of Liberals is content to propound; and we owe to him the description of the doctrine of *laissez faire* as "administrative nihilism."

It is too soon to evaluate his political achievements. But it is plain that the main fields of his success were the traditional fields of English politics—the Cabinet and the House of Commons. On the platform he was less at home; his lapidary style was not easily adapted to the tasks of the demagogue; and for the modern arts of publicity he was unsuited alike by training and by temperament. In the Cabinet, on the other hand, he seems to have been masterly, without being masterful. It has been said that no man since Peel has known so well how to handle a Cabinet; and Peel never had so difficult a team, or so great a variety of crises, as faced the Prime Minister of the stormy years from 1908 to 1914. In the House of Commons, also, he was unsurpassable. Those who marvelled at the skill with which he played upon that instrument during the Labour Ministry of 1924, and those who saw his handling of the critical days when the Budget and the Parliament Act were being carried, will testify with equal admiration to his mastery. He was at his best, indeed, in a difficulty; and perhaps he was sometimes tempted to trust to this skill, and not to anticipate coming troubles. It may be that this confidence helped to draw him into the untenable position of 1924, which ended so disastrously for his party.

It was a tragedy that his last years should have been clouded by wretched misunderstandings which alienated him from many of those who most sincerely admired him. These miserable controversies must have made him unhappy; they made us all unhappy; and they robbed the nation of the wise guidance and counsel which he could have given. But they have not dimmed our sense of his greatness, or the gratitude which we owe for a long life of unstained honour and unresting public service.

He is secure of a great place in history, as the man who shackled the House of Lords and so solved a problem which had baffled every Liberal statesman since 1832; as the Prime Minister under whose guidance the boldest policy of social amelioration yet undertaken by Parliament was carried through; as the patriot who led a united nation into the most terrible ordeal in its history. But most of all he will be remembered as a man of noble intellect and noble character, a Greatheart who let the gnats sting, who never failed a friend, who never shirked responsibility, and who never stooped to meanness.

A POINCARÉ PLEBISCITE

PARIS, FEBRUARY 13TH, 1928.

THE financial debate in the Chamber has ended with a personal triumph for M. Poincaré, whose masterly tactics have put the Radical Party in what is surely the most humiliating and ridiculous position to which a great political party has ever been reduced. It is a triumph for M. Poincaré personally, not for his policy, for he has none, or rather he has not vouchsafed to tell the Chamber what it is. He asked the Chamber for a blank cheque and the Chamber has given him one by 370 votes to 131. In April he will ask the country to ratify the blind confidence of the Chamber and, supported as he is by all the political parties except the Socialists and Communists, he has an excellent chance of success. Four weeks ago I wrote that it looked as though the issues in the general election would be as confused as they were in 1910. Now it looks as though there will be a single issue and a purely personal one. Failing a highly improbable change in the situation, the election seems likely to take the form of a plebiscite in which the electors will vote for or against M. Poincaré. I am told that in the provinces the election campaign is already developing on these lines.

It is almost inevitable that it should, for M. Poincaré has so manoeuvred that there is no other issue before the country. The Socialists and Communists will try to raise other issues and will no doubt succeed to some extent in Paris and great industrial centres, but not, I think, in the country as a whole. The Radicals can hardly escape from the position in which they have put themselves. When the electors are told, as they will be told, that they have to choose between M. Poincaré, the Saviour of France and the franc, and a return to financial chaos, how can the Radicals gainsay it after having shown by their votes in Parliament that they are of that opinion? The other day M. Cazals, chairman of the Radical group in the Chamber, said that the defeat of the Government would mean the collapse of the franc. That remark will be placarded all over France in April. M. Briand is reported to have said a few months ago that the election would be a Locarno election. He was mistaken. What do French rentiers and peasants care about Locarno with the mirage of "revalorization" before their eyes?

It is true that M. Poincaré has not promised them "revalorization," but he has been careful to give them a hope of it. In his speech of several hours he gave, as is his habit, the most precise information about the past and present financial situation, but about the future financial policy of the Government none at all. He merely stated very clearly all the objections to the various possible solutions of the currency problem and refused to say which solution he proposed to adopt, but he gave, and undoubtedly intended to give, the impression that he was opposed to legal stabilization, at any rate at the present value of the franc, and would prefer a return, if not to its pre-war value, at any rate to a considerably higher value than that at which it now stands. This studied ambiguity was no doubt dictated by purely electoral considerations. I am convinced that M. Poincaré knows as well as anybody that the restoration of the franc to par, even were it possible, would ruin France. At present the French national expenditure is, in round figures, £400,000,000, of which about half is the service of the national debt. The restoration of the franc to par would increase it to £1,200,000,000, to say nothing of its effect on industry. I doubt whether M. Poincaré even contemplates any rise in the value of the franc. Should he remain in power after the election, he will probably stabilize at the present rate. But it is obviously to his political

interest to maintain a state of uncertainty, which enables him to hold the threat of financial catastrophe over the heads of Parliament and the Cabinet. It is by means of that threat that he has thwarted the policy of reconciliation with Germany and reduced the Radicals to subjection, and, from the tactical point of view, he would be foolish to abandon his advantage. He intends to hold the same threat over the heads of the electors in April, and there is every chance that it will be equally successful with them. Of course, the uncertainty about the future value of the franc is disastrous to industry and commerce, and in the general interest of the country the franc should have been legally stabilized long ago, but that is another point of view.

M. Poincaré's tactics in this matter have been remarkably clever. By holding out a hope of eventual "revalorization" he stands to win the votes of the rentiers and the peasants, who are quite ignorant of financial questions, and think only of increasing the value of their depreciated securities and hoarded bank-notes. It is true that the increased uncertainty resulting from his speech has dismayed the financial, industrial, and trading classes, but he counts, probably with reason, on their rallying to his support through fear of a capital levy and of a more just incidence of taxation, the chief burden of which at present falls on persons with salaries, wages, or small professional earnings. He has thus, as he thinks, succeeded in conciliating conflicting interests, one of which would have been estranged by definite declaration on currency policy, and he will probably prove to be right.

Further, M. Poincaré has at the same time tied the Radicals to his chariot wheels and completely discredited them. He consented to allow them to vote for a motion in favour of immediate stabilization and the rest of their financial programme on condition that it should be defeated and that they should afterwards support a vote of confidence in the Government who reject their programme. Apparently the Radicals hoped to save their faces by this absurd farce. They drafted a motion that, in their opinion, the Socialists could not support, so as to ensure its defeat, and, when the Socialists decided to support it, made a further change in it with the same end. The Socialists then decided to abstain, but twenty-three of them threw over party discipline and voted for the Radical motion. The Socialist decision, having been made at the last moment, was not known to most of the deputies, and when, during the division, the rumour spread that M. Poincaré, although he had not made the question one of confidence, had said that he would resign if the motion were carried, several Radicals, who had already voted for the motion, hastened to put a "No" voting paper in the ballot-box to cancel their previous vote! There were so many duplicate voting papers in the ballot-boxes that the motion was declared to have been defeated by 273 votes to 212, but a scrutiny reduced the figures to 258 against 160. Such proceedings scarcely enhance the dignity of the French Parliament. Having thus, with M. Poincaré's contemptuous permission, affirmed their fidelity to their principles, the vast majority of the Radicals proceeded, in accordance with their arrangement, to vote against their principles, and for M. Poincaré. The figures of the two divisions show the chaotic state of French Radicalism. There are 206 non-Socialist deputies of the Left, of whom 137 voted for the Radical motion, 46 against, and 23 abstained or were "absent by leave." In the division on the vote of confidence 158 voted for the Government, 15 against, and 33 abstained or were absent by leave. And among the abstentionists was M. Daladier, President of the Radical Party!

What sort of figure can the Radicals hope to cut in

the election after such an exhibition as this? Although prophecy is always unsafe, one would think it likely that their fate will be the usual one of those that try to sit on two stools at once. In any case the vote of last Friday has greatly strengthened M. Poincaré's position in the country, and the cheers with which the Centre and the Right greeted the result were justified. On the result of the election will depend to a great extent the fate of Europe during the next four years. The present French Government is without a policy on foreign as on other questions, but M. Poincaré has one. As for M. Briand, his speech in the Senate the other day showed that he is prepared for all emergencies. He has never given a more skilful performance on the tight-rope.

ROBERT DELL.

LIFE AND POLITICS

THE death of Lord Oxford is like the removal of some massive natural feature from the landscape of public life: some rock or mountain that was always there, steadfast and firm in outline. It is a hopeless task to select from the crowd of thoughts that rise some aspect that can be put into a few lines. All Liberals must deplore the sad circumstances that led to the clouding of his last days by personal controversy. Underneath the stoic front he kept to the world his was a singularly sensitive nature. A close observer, watching him at moments of stress in his career, would note in the movements of his lips the index of feelings he would scorn to express. His apparent coldness was indeed a stoic mask. He was seldom a popular figure, and probably never cared whether he was or not; he thought that the only concern of the public with a statesman was with his opinions, his advice. His phraseology was, as it were, adopted as a special language fit for oracular pronouncements; even his humour was armoured in Latinisms. I have seen him in many gatherings when one would think the passionate sympathy of his political friends would have moved him to indiscretion or at least to unguarded speech, but he always preserved the same proud, magnanimous pose. I like to think at this moment of the generosity and largeness of mind that all could divine rather in his silences than his words. As the leader of a great party he was undoubtedly hampered by the barrier of ice which his temperament placed in the way of response to popular emotion, but only the malicious or the stupid ever accused him of want of feeling for the woes of humanity. It is nearer the truth to say that he felt too deeply for facile expression to be possible to him. It was his choice to be misunderstood rather than to give himself away. This type of character has always been highly honoured if not warmly loved in our public life, and abundantly honoured Lord Oxford was by multitudes who had small appreciation of his standards, but who responded instinctively to the greatness of his moral and intellectual stature.

* * *

The Liberal Party behaves in a most disconcerting fashion. Labour leaders nail it nicely down in the coffin and lighthearted Tories compose a neat epitaph—whereupon the corpse arises with alarming vivacity. The Conservatives were so sure about Lancaster that they thought it safe to sneer in their papers in advance. The result has been interpreted in many ways. The simplest and best explanation is that the place is full of Liberals (its history demonstrates this) who are as willing as ever to respond to a leadership that knows its own mind and shows itself full of fight. Timid people thought that Mr. Lloyd George was taking too great a risk in returning to reply on the

spot to the preposterous Ashton letter. They forgot that he is a man who shows the essence of his power in the willingness to take risks and to win through. The probability is that in any case the electors would have expressed at the poll their resentment of the vulgar attempt at the exercise of influence by the linoleum Lord who, because he happens to pay wages to thousands of voters, thinks he has bought their political convictions as well. On the whole the Ashton outburst will do good. It has cleared the air, for Lord Ashton, an old and unwary man, only said out loud what others prefer to insinuate in private. The personal vendetta in the Liberal Party has done untold harm chiefly in absorbing energies that were so much better spent in work for Liberalism. Lancaster shows the impatience of the ordinary Liberal with this fanatical nursing of old scores. We have had enough of it.

There is something delightful in the audacity of Mr. Churchill, even in small matters. His thoroughly sensible plea the other day for the removal of the ban on political controversy by wireless, is an instance. The "idiotic" rule against which he protested is imposed by his own colleague the Postmaster-General, presumably with the approval of the Cabinet. The Broadcasting Corporation dislikes it as much as do most intelligent listeners. The programmes are in danger of becoming distressingly trivial; what is wanted is the stimulus of the wholesomely contentious. There ought to be no difficulty in plotting out the available time between the parties so as to give all opinions a fair show, and this would serve the larger need of doing something to quicken popular interest in politics, which is a steadily diminishing quantity. Only, whatever is done, please do not broadcast Parliamentary debates. That would be fatal.

I am glad to see that the Foundling Protection Association is continuing its struggle to rouse the conscience of London. The trustees of Captain Coram's foundation having shuffled out of their responsibilities, and sold the place with a cynical disregard of whether the hospital and the open space are destroyed or not, the task of saving them is thrown on the few people who alone seem to care. Can it be true that Londoners as a whole are indifferent to the spectacle of ten-storey flats blotting out the best part of two beautiful squares and a unique relic of eighteenth-century philanthropy? If so, there is confessed an amazing confusion of values, and we must admit that London thinks more of allowing a company to cash dividends out of violated health and beauty than of taking steps to preserve a picture of the past. I do not believe that it is so: I think that the mass of people are too busy and too worried to spare the requisite attention to what is happening. It should be still possible to bring it home if not to the multitude then to some rich man or rich men that we are wasting a heritage, and earning the contempt of posterity. At the meeting the other night Sir Bruce Bruce-Porter made a good point. Coram founded his Hospital to save children from the streets. The Hospital and its surrounding spaces are wanted even more for the same purpose to-day, for the traffic in the London streets is killing thousands of children every year. Kindly people will give money for bird sanctuaries. Will no one pay for a Children's Sanctuary?

The centenary estimates of Meredith were (with two notable exceptions) disappointing to me; they seemed to express chiefly the dislike and neglect that are fashionable at the moment. Perhaps the event coming so soon after the obituaries of Hardy, made a just attitude difficult towards the older and as I think the more affluent and stimulating writer. I do not know in the least whether anyone feels

as I do about this inevitable comparison, but it matters to me that Hardy's philosophy is destructive of the springs of life while Meredith's renews and strengthens them. This no doubt is desperately old-fashioned. After all, the only use of these centenaries is to furnish an excuse for re-reading, and I have been celebrating Meredith's centenary in recaptured delight over my sixth or seventh journey with Harry Richmond, my favourite. I will merely ask whether there is any novel that has a more magnificent opening, or a more magnificent close. But it is impossible for me to be critical about Meredith, though I could make out a list of his faults with anybody. I owe him too much of exquisite and abounding pleasure in youth. He among all novelists is surely the one who speaks most alluringly to the unjaded mind.

On Sunday night Mr. Poel once more proved the case for doing Elizabethan plays in the Elizabethan manner. I greatly enjoyed his production of "Sejanus His Fall," a play which seemed to be particularly suited to presentation on the platform stage. Indeed without serious loss it could not be produced behind the proscenium arch. What, in that event, would become of the asides, almost a continuous chorus, of the enemies of tyranny? In the reading, Sejanus strikes one as rather monotonous and wooden, but it is astonishing how thoroughly it comes to life when played in the conditions for which Ben Jonson designed it. The fact that it is eminently a play of noble rhetoric is another reason why the platform stage, which allows of elocutionary emphasis in a way the picture stage does not, is needed to do it justice. The apron stage is, of course, "the proper dais for rhetoric." To those unfamiliar with Mr. Poel's methods this interesting performance must have been a revelation of unsuspected beauty and variety in the theatre. For some forty years now Mr. Poel has been clearing, against every possible obstacle, the plain path of sense in the matter of staging Shakespeare and his fellow dramatists. It will be certainly a scandal if the opportunity of the new Stratford theatre is not utilized to establish genuine Elizabethan productions. We are missing the half of Shakespeare by sheer perversity.

My reflections last week on the title of "Janitor's" book and Ananias reminds a correspondent of the repartee by a well-known Cambridge don. A traveller was dining at the High Table, at one of the Colleges, and telling tall stories. At length he turned to the younger dons and said, "You young men will bear me out."

"Yes," said one of them, "and the young men bore out Ananias."

In the light of this witticism, "Janitor's" title seems a good one for an anonymous gossip!

KAPPA.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE FAVERSHAM ELECTION

SIR,—In your references to the results at Northampton and Faversham you say:—

"There is in our view no doubt whatever as to the cause. Liberals have been fighting the recent by-elections on the purely negative ground of Anti-Safeguarding and Economy, giving indeed to the latter an interpretation and an emphasis which makes it not only negative but definitely reactionary."

The only comment I wish to make is that so far as the election at Faversham is concerned this does not happen to be true.—Yours, &c.,

J. FREEMAN DUNN.

Poynings, Sheldon Avenue, Highgate, N.6.
February 7th, 1928.

[We regret that the passage which Mr. Dunn quotes should have been phrased so carelessly as to lump together

Faversham and Northampton in an unduly sweeping generalization, and indeed as to appear to relate more particularly than we intended to the policies of the Liberal candidate at either by-election. What we had mainly in mind was the fact that a negative, and, in our view, reactionary economy note has been extremely prominent of late in Liberal utterances and propaganda—or what are taken to be Liberal utterances and propaganda. There are many persons throughout the country, speaking and writing in the name of Liberalism with a considerable measure of publicity, who have been laying such stress on the importance of reducing the volume of national expenditure as to suggest that they are anxious to persuade the electors that the Liberal Party is Scrooge's true friend. Some do it out of sincere conviction; some go further in this direction than their real opinions under the influence of the singular illusion that Scrooge is a popular figure. Our protest was directed primarily against the recent undue prevalence of this attitude which reacts, we believe, on every by-election. It was certainly our impression that even Mr. Dunn indicated a good deal more sympathy with the "economizers" than we like. But our remarks, if read, as they might be, as a description of his attitude, do him a serious injustice; and we offer him our sincere apologies.—Ed., NATION.]

THE EDUCATION OF MR. CHAMBERLAIN

SIR,—The passage you quote from Mr. Churchill's speech at Birmingham, containing his recognition of the unequal and crippling burden of local rates, seems to indicate, as you say, some change more radical than the mere introduction of a system of block grants, which the Government appeared to regard as adequate fifteen months ago. That was then the policy to which Mr. Chamberlain looked forward for a permanent solution of the problem. THE NATION took another view, and it is satisfactory to find that the Government now admits the necessity for a reform of the rating system.

This is not the only point upon which there has been a change of attitude. The memorandum on Poor Law Reform issued in June, 1927, when compared with the memorandum of the previous year, exhibits striking alterations which have hardly received the attention they deserve. Little beyond the bare outline of the earlier one now remains.

The County Council was to have been the supervising and controlling authority for all health purposes throughout the administrative county. This proviso, to which the Association of Municipal Corporations is strongly opposed, "no longer appears in the memorandum," as it is being dealt with by the Royal Commission on Local Government.

In the original memorandum, the County Council was also to form committees for the new duties, assisted where necessary by local sub-committees. It was pointed out that the ratepayers and the community could not but benefit by a change of system approaching to the position of a single local authority wholly or mainly responsible for the local administration of its area, and for viewing as a whole the finance of local government in its area. Also it was considered essential that county control should be secured both in the interests of uniformity and with the object of spreading the burden over as large an area as possible, and for the purposes of the new financial arrangements.

In the later proposals the County Council has entirely disappeared as the administrator of out-door relief. This is now allotted to various Councils, including presumably the Councils of non-County Boroughs, Urban Districts, and Rural Districts. Hence uniformity of treatment and control of finance at once disappear. In rural areas the Guardians remain as Rural District Councillors, in urban areas their functions are handed over to the local Councils. No more is heard of spreading the burden. The scheme of financial reform no longer appears. We are told that it is still under consideration. Further, all the sections relating to London are withdrawn, as they are still under discussion with the L.C.C. and Metropolitan Borough Councils.

What, then, remains?

(a) The abolition of Boards of Guardians, their relief functions being allocated to the local Councils (with the omission of the County Council).

(b) Poor Law Institutions to be handed over to County Councils and County Borough Councils.

This leaves such a number of important problems in suspense that it is not surprising to find that the King's Speech contains no reference to Poor Law Reform. The delay will give still further time for consideration, and it is to be hoped that in following the line of thought indicated by Mr. Churchill at Birmingham, Mr. Chamberlain will find himself in agreement with the policy advocated in the Report of the Liberal Industrial Inquiry, and will recognize the imperative necessity of removing from local rates the illogical and intolerable burden of unemployment.—Yours, &c.,

FLORENCE A. KEYNES.

Cambridge.

February 11th, 1928.

"LIBERALS" IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

SIR,—Your contributor "Kappa" gives expression to a grievance widely felt by the rank and file Liberals when he draws attention to the habitual action of certain members of the Parliamentary Party and to its discouraging effect in the country. But he suggests no definite remedy. No Liberal wishes, I hope, to interfere, even if he could, with the independence of any member of the Party when he cannot conscientiously vote with his Party. Such independence is manifested in every party, and, naturally, most of all in the Liberal Party. The rank and file feel no grievance there. But it is well known to everyone that there are certain members, and it is to these doubtless that "Kappa" refers, in the present Parliament who have been returned in consequence of a local pact with the Conservative Party, who vote habitually half time with the Government and half time with the Liberal Party, or else abstain. The inevitable consequence is that the summary of the division lists constantly reads something like this:—

		Ayes.	Noes.
Conservatives	...	120	—
Labour	...	—	80
Liberals	...	12	12
Independents	...	2	1

Taking these figures from the official lists (which are reproduced in the LIBERAL MAGAZINE) the Labour Party has produced a most effective leaflet dealing with various series of important divisions showing that the "Liberal" Party votes so evenly on opposite sides as to nullify itself in many divisions. I am no stickler for heresy hunting, and very anxious that Members of Parliament should preserve their independence. But I submit that in this unusual, and I hope temporary, situation the Organization Committee of the Party should ask the Chief Whip not to issue summonses to Party meetings to these "Liberal Conservatives," and to request the Editor of the LIBERAL MAGAZINE no longer to classify these members as "Liberals," but as "Independents," as the Conservative Party classifies Mr. A. Hopkinson. If these two alterations were made, the Liberal Party in the House would appear in its true light, not as a Party habitually divided into two approximately equal portions, but as being as united as either of the other parties, cases of individual independence in all parties appearing from time to time. The Liberal Party would appear smaller than it now appears to be, but such a classification would bring the record into agreement with the facts. The present method of record is an entirely false and misleading one.—Yours, &c.,

W. M. CROOK.

THE OUTLAWRY OF WAR

SIR,—It is an unfortunate fact that the devotion to the League of Nations of its less critical supporters should make them so prone to see as a dangerous rival any proposition which dares to appear under a Peace heading, but which does not start by accepting the whole of the existing League organization.

One would naturally think that, since America quite obviously will not join the League as at present constituted, and since that institution is equally obviously incapable of ordaining world peace without American assistance, any

proposal which admittedly represents a large and growing body of American opinion would arouse some semblance of a desire to seek for possible points of agreement, rather than for points of disagreement.

Obsessed as he apparently is by the necessity for force in international relations, it was natural that Mr. Stein should have been shocked by the lack of "military guarantees" in the Borah-Levinson plan, but I venture to suggest that he is hardly fair to Dr. Morrison in ignoring entirely his destructive criticism of the sanctions system, and his case for what is claimed to be a more solid form of sanction than the military kind.

Mr. Stein says that the outlawry scheme is a mere game of "let's pretend." Could any epithet prove a more fatal boomerang in the service of a supporter of a system of military sanctions which:—

- (1) *Is an illusion*, since it rests in the final analysis upon the pledged word, just as does the outlawry scheme, with the difference that the military form is a promise by Governments that their peoples *will* fight, whereas the other is the pledged word of the peoples themselves that they *will not* fight.
- (2) *Will not function*, because America will not agree to a European definition of "aggression", which she believes to be inspired as much by a desire to perpetuate the *status quo* of the peace treaties, as by any sincere desire for peace.
- (3) *Does nothing to create a sense of security* in so far as can be judged from such military guarantees as have been obtained. In this respect M. Briand's reply to Dr. Stresemann in the French Senate last week is striking evidence of the failure of Locarno to provide that psychological atmosphere which must precede material disarmament.
- (4) *Can never lead to disarmament*. The traditional influence of, for instance, the British Admiralty upon the Foreign Office, or the Etat Major upon the Quai d'Orsay, is as great as ever, and it is absurd to suppose that either would permit drastic disarmament so long as America and Russia were not both parties to the agreement. Dr. Morrison, indeed, asserts with reason that nothing approaching total disarmament can be reached so long as the institutional status of war remains unchanged. It may be added that the man in the street is no longer interested in small technical changes.
- (5) *Would conceivably destroy the League if it was ever put into force*. If ever a game of "let's pretend" was inaugurated it was surely when *soi-disant* "realist" politicians set out to eliminate the war system by making an ally of war. The whole theory is the greatest bluff ever foisted upon a too credulous humanity.

Mr. Stein gives but a meagre indication of the constructive proposals set out in the book, but, inadequate though it is, it is sufficient to contradict his other statement that outlawry seeks "to get rid of war by calling it names," and, without wishing to trespass upon your space to discuss that machinery, I would call attention to the point he entirely overlooks, which is that the machinery when created shall be submitted to a plebiscite of the peoples before being ratified by the Parliaments.

Hitherto Governments have made pledges in the name of their peoples, that those peoples shall be asked to go to war in certain eventualities, and hitherto the pledges have been "honoured" by the peoples, even though often broken by the Governments themselves. But to-day all sections of the community, and especially the financiers and industrialists who control the real sinews of modern war, are beginning to realize that war will never again operate to their advantage. There is in consequence a probability that a Government demand to its people to honour a war pledge, any war pledge, will be met by resistance from precisely those elements of the community without whose aid war cannot be waged. Since all international agreements are seen to rest upon the pledged word, is it not time that this word—and the law—were placed upon the side of morality and self-interest?

And, in view of this perception, fortified by international

developments in industry, finance, transportation, and labour organizations, is it not a great deal more probable that the pledged word of the peoples *not* to resort to war would be worth far more than the word of their Governments that they *would* do so?

Add to this the suggested means of dealing with those individuals who tried to foment a revolution against international law, and the method of outlawry really does not seem to compare so badly with the fantastic suggestion that peace can be successfully "enforced" in a world hypnotized by militarism.—Yours, &c.,

HARRISON BROWN.

75, Gordon Mansions,
Francis Street, London, W.C.1
February 7th, 1928.

"EAST AND WEST"

SIR,—It is disconcerting to see how gullible reviewers of works on China can be. Mr. Lowes Dickinson in his review of "A Chinaman's Opinion of Us and of His Own Country" (THE NATION, November 26th, 1927), while allowing a doubt of its genuineness, seems to think it may be taken seriously. No educated Chinese would tolerate for a moment a translation of his dignified tongue into the fatuous imitation of *pidgin* English which Mr. Lowes Dickinson quotes: and there is no surer way of annoying a Chinese to-day than to call him a Chinaman. A judge of the Provisional Court in Shanghai, a Chinese, has recently reproved a foreign barrister for the use of the expression. These elementary facts are sufficient to show that the book cannot be taken as representing Chinese opinion of the West, but only as another eighteenth-century criticism of our civilization by one of ourselves.

Mr. Lowes Dickinson repeats the cheap criticism against foreign missions that "the missionary has been the pioneer of the trader." Historically this is untrue, and Mr. Dickinson ought to know it. Nestorian Missions did not count so far as trade was concerned. Roman Catholic missions were preceded by travellers such as Marco Polo, and we have yet to learn that they were in any way the pioneers of trade. Protestant Missions definitely followed trade. The first missionary, Robert Morison, went out East as a clerk in the East India Company, and missionaries did not enter China until the Treaty Ports had been opened at the instance of traders. Missionaries are as a rule on good terms with traders at present, but for many years they were extremely unpopular for their vigorous and uncompromising opposition to the opium traffic, which is now illegal.

When Mr. Lowes Dickinson quotes with approval the statement of the supposed author of the book that "We have no equivalent name for 'hypocrite' in our language," one would like to fling one's cap in the air and caper with amusement. Whether it has been necessary to coin the words used at present to translate this expression I am not sufficient Chinese scholar to know. But the one thing that has been impressed on my mind by residence in China is that the hypocrisy which is thrown into such a high relief by the Teaching of Jesus is the common, everyday constituent of non-Christian life. Failure to live up to the excellent principles of Confucian morality by the officials of the old regime was only equalled by the common assumption that any agreement between professed opinions and action upon them was only to be expected in very exceptional cases: and the saddest thing about the present nationalist movement is the debasing of the verbal currency by the acceptance of the catchwords of the movement by every military adventurer and every corrupt office-seeker. It is so much the fashion to use the phraseology of the party in power, Communist one day, Nationalist the next, that no one would dream of deducing the party affiliations, still less the private opinions, of any man from his public utterances. People just wait to see what he does.

There is so much of real constructive value that might be said in regard to the present situation that it is a vast pity that one of the reputation of Mr. Lowes Dickinson should lend his name to such claptrap.—Yours, &c.,

T. W. DOUGLAS JAMES.

English Presbyterian Mission, Swatow.
January 15th, 1928.

ITALIAN RULE IN THE TYROL

SIR,—As Mr. C. H. Herford, in his article on "The Situation in German South Tyrol," published in your issue of to-day, brings in the Italian delegation at the recent meeting of the League of Nations Societies at Sofia, of which I was a member—in fact, he does me the honour of mentioning me by name—I trust you will allow me to correct some of the inaccuracies contained in that article.

Where Mr. Herford learnt that the Italians "had the air of prisoners on trial at the bar of Europe" (!), I am at a loss to conceive. I can assure him that we none of us felt in the least like prisoners, and as for the "bar of Europe," only those who are affected by the *folie des grandeurs* could regard the interesting but very modest meetings of the Federation of League of Nations Societies in that light. He tells us further that the Greek resolution was of "like import" to that of Mme. Bakker, and that both were voted unanimously, the Italians alone abstaining from voting. What really happened was very different. The Greek resolution proposed by M. Argyropoulos stated that "the Minorities Commission . . . is convinced that the Italian League of Nations Societies, majority and minority, inspired by a mutual desire to settle their outstanding questions, will be able in a common effort to reach an agreement which can be received with pleasure by the Federation." This is tantamount to regarding the problem as an Italian internal one, and this was the significance attached to it. It was passed without a single contrary vote, the Italians voting for it, although the Germans and Austrians and some others abstained. It should be noted that the representatives of the Germans and Slavs in Italy expressly approved of it in a declaration to that effect at the meeting. Signor Giarratana's contention that "the congress agreed to regard the German and Slav minorities as a matter concerning Italy alone," is therefore substantially correct.

Mr. Herford's last sentence, "To such depths must despotism, in such hands, descend," should be modified by inserting the words "prejudice or at least ignorance of the facts" in the place of "despotism"!

Mr. Herford has evidently not been to the Balkans. If he had he would have formed some notion of what real persecution of minorities can be. Unfortunately, knowledge of such Balkan affairs can only be acquired by travelling in places where one must face great discomfort and even danger, whereas in the Alto Adige there are excellent hotels and other amenities of life.

I do not wish to trespass further on your space, and I think I have said enough to prove that even Mr. Herford's statements need not be taken too seriously.—Yours, &c.,

LUIGI VILLARI.

8, Duke Street, St. James's Square, S.W.1.

"THE FORWARD VIEW"

SIR,—May I, through you, express my thanks to "Kappa" for his very generous reference to THE FORWARD VIEW, and may I trespass further on your kindness by pointing out that the paper can either be obtained direct from the publishers, Messrs. Wm. Sessions, Ltd., The Ebor Press, York, price 3s. 6d. per annum, postage paid; or ordered through a newsagent from the Liberal Publication Department, who are kindly acting as our wholesale agents? I do this because we have not yet ventured to launch out on a bookstall distribution, and I know that some who would like to subscribe to THE FORWARD VIEW have found difficulty in obtaining it.—Yours, &c.,

ELLIOTT DODDS.

144, Fitzwilliam Street, Huddersfield.

"BOOKS FOR BOYS"

SIR,—Why should the "Harkaway" series be labelled "Dreadfuls"? In a little village at Heacham, Norfolk, three of us boys used to take and exchange his "Young Men of Great Britain," "The Boys of England," "Our Boys' Journal," and those Harkaway series which were brought down to the next generation of the Harkaways, and were of entrancing interest to us boys, and I confess that I should now like once again to read the whole series, and compare

old-age interest with youth, and then present them to my grandson.

In recent years, when on the Stoke Newington Library Committee, I learned, by a book presented to the Library, that Brett, the publisher, had a hobby, that of collecting or photographing old armour. It was described by one of our Committee as "a weighty book," and it was.—Yours, &c.,

GEO. W. ALCOCK.

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI

SIR,—I have been collecting for a long time materials for a monograph (in French) on Dante Gabriel Rossetti, whose centenary falls in this year.

I shall be grateful to any of your readers who would kindly give me details of hitherto unpublished letters or personal anecdotes concerning Dante Rossetti and his friends. Such communications will be acknowledged with sincerest thanks in the forthcoming volume.—Yours, &c.,

S. N. GHOSE.

6, Rond-Point de Plainpalais,
Geneva, Switzerland.

THE LONDON HOSPITAL—
QUINQUENNIAL YEAR

SIR,—I have been silent for five years, but now once again, and probably for the last time in my life, I have to ask everyone to help the London Hospital. I have done this every fifth year since 1896, and at seventy-three years of age can hardly expect to have energy, or anything, left five years hence.

Somehow, we must raise £250,000 (two million half-crowns) this year. It would save much weary work and expense if this could be done without the giddy excitement of Bazaars, Dances, and other similar delirious endeavours.

Surely we have a good enough cause.

Let me put it plainly without exaggeration. The "London" is the largest Hospital in England, and in its poorest corner. It has been almost entirely rebuilt in the last thirty years at a cost of nearly £1,000,000. In its 188 years' work for the sick poor it has never been better able to meet its responsibilities. But here is the tragedy—we have to face a large deficit every year. So far we have succeeded in meeting these deficits by super-efforts in our Quinquennial Appeals.

The Hospital costs £260,000 a year to run. This is for upkeep only, and takes no account of progress.

Medicine, Surgery, Nursing—none of these stand still. New discoveries are made, new methods of treatment thought out, more nursing required. This week, to give the last instance, we have received a strongly worded request from the Surgical Staff for a further supply of Radium, costing £3,000. Is it to be refused? No. But only those who have been through the experience can realize how strong the temptation is to turn one's back on some really hopeful idea of saving life, simply because there is no money. Certain it is, however, that the plea of Deficits must not prevail. Lessening suffering, conquering disease, must be the ideal ever before a large Hospital, and so long as we maintain that ideal at the "London," I hope the public will not let us down.

Further, the duty of a large Hospital is not only to cure the present sick, but to study the causes of disease—to "prevent" (both in the usual, and in the Prayer Book sense) disease. This cannot be done without organization, without proper equipment, without collected experience. We have all this at the "London" to-day. It is heartbreaking to see it imperilled.

I do not ask that the Hospital should be made rich, I do not look for any sum that will do away entirely with anxiety as to the future, but I do ask that this great Hospital should be made secure for the next five years if only as a tribute to the work it has done for the country during the last 188.

The workers are there. The money is not.—Yours, &c.,

KNUTSFORD (Chairman).

The London Hospital, Whitechapel, E.1.

February 4th, 1928.

AN IMAGINARY CONFERENCE

BY ONE OF THE UNORTHODOX.

(SCENE: The dining-room of a house in Bloomsbury. The owner, a Sentimental Agnostic, is walking slowly round the table, putting a sheet of paper in front of each chair in readiness for a conference. On the table are two piles of books, consisting of the volumes of the series "What I Believe" and "Affirmations; God in the Modern World."† Miss Maude Royden is announced.)

SENTIMENTAL AGNOSTIC: Ah! my dear Maude, radiant as ever, a model of Parisian elegance as the American journalists have said, how nice of you to come so early! We shall have time for a talk before the others come. Have a cigarette? No? Well there is no need for you to assert your independence here. England's so different from America. I congratulate you on your admirable book: so outspoken, so full of feeling.

MISS M. R. (earnestly): Do you really like it?

S. A.: But of course I do. And yet there are times when I almost wish you hadn't written it. The trouble is you've set the fashion. Look at all those books on religion. (He points to the eleven books in the centre of the table.) One man believes in one thing and another in another, and a third in nothing at all; and some of them are not content with writing less than two or three hundred pages to say so. What on earth is a wretched reviewer to do? So I thought I'd call a conference to try and clear things up a little. Take my friend, Julian Huxley, for example. He believes apparently in nothing except Belief; will have nothing to do with Revelation or with "that kernel of revelation, a personal God"; but declares that "our beliefs about Belief are among the most important we possess," and writes a book of 384 pages to prove it. And yet I must confess that I find his book fascinating—so ingenious, so well-written, so far-fetched. Sometimes, I think, he comes nearest of you all to enforcing my own view of religion . . . if only I knew what that is.

MISS M. R. (her face falling): I really believe you like his book better than mine. I had hoped you were going to give me the first prize.

S. A.: How absurd you are! There's no question of first or second prize. The two books are quite different; and, as I have already told you, I like yours enormously. (A pause.) But at times—if you will forgive my frankness, I find it just a little too orthodox for my taste. Not in substance, of course, but in tone. The fact is, as you know, that I have a sort of passion against orthodoxy. It seems to me the very bane of religion, the invention of the Devil himself, and though I don't suggest that you're altogether orthodox, you have, if I may say so, a certain tendency that way. That's the trouble, of course, with all Anglicans. In the matter of orthodoxy they're like *nouveaux riches* in the matter of gentility. Not being quite sure of themselves, they're always thinking about it. And you, my dear Maude, have, as you say, "a soul naturally Anglican." You can't help it. I am not blaming you. You were born that way.

MISS M. R. (surprised): Orthodox? Do you call me orthodox? Have you ever read my thirteenth chapter, or, like all reviewers, are you criticizing what you've never read?

S. A.: Thirteenth, thirteenth?

* "I Believe in God." By Maude Royden. "The Belief of Catholics." By Father Ronald Knox. "Religion without Revelation." By Professor Julian Huxley. (Benn. 7s. 6d. each.)

† "The Ascent of Man." By A. A. Milne. "Life as Material." By R. Ellis Roberts. "Mind and Reality." By Viscount Haldane. "Energy, Human and Divine." By Dr. A. A. David. "The Sin Obsession." By Percy Dearmer. "God is Love. Can This be True?" By Dr. James M. Wilson. (Benn. 1s. each.) "What Can a Man Believe?" By Bruce Barton. (Constable. 3s. 6d.) "My Religion." By Helen Keller. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s.)

MISS M. R.: Yes: the one about the Virgin Birth of Christ.

S. A.: Ah, yes, of course, the Virgin Birth: that "He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary"—I am afraid you no longer accept that beautiful old tradition.

MISS M. R.: Whether beautiful or not, I don't accept it. On the contrary, I show conclusively that it can't be true.

S. A.: Then do you really believe that Christ was the son of an earthly father, conceived and born in sin like the rest of us?

MISS M. R. (indignantly): I beg you not to say such things about me. When have I ever said anything of the kind? To say that Christ was born in sin because he was the son of Joseph—as no doubt he was—is to imply that the sex-act itself is evil, which is a doctrine I utterly repudiate, as you would have known at once if you had ever read my book. Our Lady, at any rate, did not share your false idea. She knew—perhaps she was the first to know—that love is purity, and that the love which unites two human beings (*hastily turning over the pages of her book*)—yes, there it is; you will find it all on page 158—"the love which unites two human beings in the procreation of another is like the love of God himself." I believe a day is coming . . .

(A bell rings.)

S. A. (much relieved): Ah! there they are. Excuse me for a moment. (Goes to the window and peeps.) Yes; they seem all to have come; quite a nice little crowd.

MISS M. R.: I hope the Bishop of Liverpool is coming?

S. A.: No, unfortunately not. He is too much worried over the Prayer Book and the question of continuous Reservation, and Lord Haldane is too busy with Labour politics; but most of the others, I think, will be here.

(The door opens, and they come in gradually in little groups, the Reverend Percy Dearmer and the Reverend Canon Wilson, Mr. Bruce Barton, Mr. Ellis Roberts and Mr. A. A. Milne, Father Ronald Knox and Professor Huxley. After the usual introductions and observations, the S. A. takes the chair and proceeds.)

S. A.: Miss Royden and gentlemen: I am sorry that we have only one lady present, for women, as we all know, from the Blessed Virgin's day—I beg Miss Royden's pardon, I should have said from the Blessed Mother's day—to our own, have always been the mainstay of religion. I had hoped very much that we might also have had the pleasure of welcoming amongst us Miss Helen Keller who wrote that wonderfully moving little book on Swedenborgianism—a very remarkable achievement. But unfortunately Miss Keller, as you know, has been both blind and deaf from childhood—that is what makes her book so remarkable—and, though she sends us a message of good will, she feels that she could not be of much help to us in our conference. But now, my friends, to business. I call upon Father Knox, as the representative of the oldest religious body present, to open the discussion.

MR. DEARMER: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman; is it suggested that we of the Church of England are to accept the position that the Roman Catholic body in England—the Italian Mission . . .

CHAIRMAN (severely): That is not a point of order. I do hope we shall all do our best to keep the rule of charity and avoid unnecessary bickerings. I call upon Father Knox.

FATHER R. K.: Let me say at once, Mr. Chairman, that I have no intention whatever of answering Mr. Dearmer. I have not the qualifications, even if I had the whim, to pick up such gauntlets. And fortunately there is

no occasion for me to do so. The Church to which I belong has no need of defenders. I am here not to argue but to state; not to defend a position, but to assert a claim.

THE CHAIRMAN (mildly): I think perhaps it would be as well, Father, if you would address yourself more directly to the question on the paper.

FATHER R. K.: Certainly; I was just coming to that. (*He reads from the Agenda on the paper.*) "To consider the present state of religion in England and the best means of promoting it." I will take the two points in order. First, as to the state of our religion. It is the fashion to say that we are witnessing a great religious revival. "Never before within living memory"—so my Publishers declare on the dust-wrapper of my little book—"has there been so deep and widespread an interest in religion." Interest perhaps, discussion certainly. Within the last few years, even within the last few months, the output of discussion and controversy in the Press has been enormous. But this itch for discussion is not really an encouraging symptom. Men do not talk about their health when their health is strongest; and I assert unhesitatingly that within the last one hundred years, within the last fifty years, within the last twenty-five years the force of religion as a factor in English life has steadily and visibly declined. In the Church of England the shortage of candidates for Holy Orders is notorious; but the shortage of the laity is hardly less serious. The Church of England according to its baptismal register still numbers some twenty-five millions of nominal members; but what of its Easter Communion? It is doubtful if its effective membership constitutes one-tenth of the population of the country. And the various Nonconformist bodies are hardly in a better case. Unhampered by tradition, unretarded by the trammels of antiquity, they are free to catch the wind of the moment and sink their nets where the fishing seems best. In the very titles of their discourses—those high-flown literary titles which you see posted up Sunday by Sunday on the chapel notice-boards—they do their best to tickle the ear of the passer-by. But, in spite of it all, their numbers are stationary or declining. Organized religion, with one conspicuous exception, has shrunk and is still shrinking. There is modernism among the clergy, and scepticism among the laity. The Bible was never so little believed—I doubt if it was ever so little read—as it is to-day.

THE CHAIRMAN: And the exception, Father Knox; perhaps you will now tell us about that?

FATHER R. K.: The exception, of course, is the Catholic Church. It is the one religious body that does not alter its message or show a shrinkage. On the contrary, it registers a steady yearly increase in membership. If the claim made by the Catholic Church is against human reason, as Protestants so often assert, is it not remarkable that in an enlightened country like ours she should still be making converts at the rate of some twelve thousand a year? How does she manage to play off her confidence trick with such repeated success? Think of her age-long history and her wide diffusion: how Catholicism pervades Europe and is growing in the new world. Not for two hundred and fifty years, since persecution ended, has the Church had a better all-round reception than it has to-day. Even the Press begins to take notice of us.

CHAIRMAN: Is not this largely due to the amazing beauty of its ritual?

FATHER R. K.: To some extent no doubt that is so; but our ritual is the least important part of our appeal. After all, the ritual—the hocus-pocus, the mumbo-jumbo, as our forefathers called it—is very easily imitated. The tapers flickering on an altar, the slow silences and sudden bursts of sound, the figures moving to and fro, the tinkling bells, the incense-smoke caught in the shifting lights of a

high-windowed building—all this our High Church friends can do quite as well or even better than we do; inasmuch that if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. But the Anglo-Catholics, as they call themselves, are an unhappy, uncertain body. Their unity is that of a party, not of a creed. Our claim, the claim of the Catholic Church, is something far deeper than all this: it is a claim to supreme authority in faith and morals. Amidst all the shifting movements and confusing cries of the modern world, that is what still attracts men to us. But, Mr. Chairman, I have said enough, and must be going. The world will always be divided between those who take it or leave it and those who split the difference. It is only to the former . . .

SEVERAL VOICES: Before Father Knox goes I should like to ask him . . .

MISS MAUDE ROYDEN: I really must protest . . .

FATHER R. K.: I am very sorry to appear discourteous, but have no authority to explain this matter further. I came, at your request, to make a statement. I cannot take part in a discussion.

(Amidst murmurs of disapproval he withdraws.)
(*To be continued.*)

THE CONTEMPORARY ART SOCIETY'S LOAN EXHIBITION

THIS is the second loan exhibition of foreign paintings by living artists organized by the Contemporary Art Society. It is surprising to see how greatly English collections have been enriched by important examples of such work within these few intervening years. The taste for Bonnard has evidently grown rapidly, and he now ranks second only to Matisse in the number and importance of his works, with de Segonzac and Derain in the next place. It is noticeable that hardly any new Picassos have found their way to England. There is indeed nothing here representative of his later developments. The general impression of the gallery is of the charm and gaiety of the colour and the decorative effectiveness of most of these works. Undoubtedly much of Matisse's popularity is due to his discovery of a method of interpreting the three-dimensional space of the field of vision in terms which do not destroy the evident unity of his painted surface. His colours and tones count twice over, as it were; once as patches on the decorated canvas, and once as planes in an imagined space.

In order to do this he relies freely upon the spectator's power to grasp allusions to actual appearance. This power, for many people, is not immediately forthcoming, but when once we have learned his allusive idiom there is even a special pleasure in the ease with which we read his hints. Take, for instance, "Femme Assise" (No. 60). Here Matisse establishes a system of compensation by which, although the design is instantly grasped, all the parts are maintained at a sufficiently even level for the whole surface to function decoratively. Thus the figure being in the centre and, for both formal and representational reasons, the most emphatic part of the design is expressed by means of allusions of extreme subtlety and evocative power. We are told hardly anything about the modelling of the form, it is hinted at only by infinitesimal changes within the sweep of the brush stroke. On the other hand, the pattern on the carpet is carefully outlined. By this curious inversion of the ordinary emphasis Matisse makes his canvas an unbroken decorative texture, like some Persian fabric, and at the same time by something almost uncanny in the effectiveness of his cursive allusions he creates something like an illusion of the presence and palpable reality of the figure. Or take No. 67, "Gorge du Loups," a tangle of foliage with the dither of sunlight falling through the trees on to a path. No field of vision could be chosen that would seem to lend itself less to Matisse's method with its total denial of chiaroscuro, its insistence on interpreting everything in terms of a bare

dozen of tints and tones. And yet Matisse seems to find at once—the impression of spontaneity and immediacy is decisive—to find just those dozen tones which will set up a new and surprising chord of decorative colour and evoke in the mind a perfectly convincing echo of the natural scene. Perhaps no one of these tones actually occurred in nature, but we recognize their truth with a shock of delighted surprise. One feels, "Why did I never think of that before as being the colour of sunlight on a path," or whatever it is. The very fact that nothing is literal, that all is due to a transposition, gives to this recognition something of the pleasure of an apt poetical simile.

Matisse's gift for discovering these allusive analogies is simply marvellous. In each of the examples here shown, some quite distinct aspect of appearance has set his invention going, and yet he is never at a loss; he never pulls the effect round to some familiar scheme which he has practised before; every time his invention comes up to the scratch and every time we are surprised into a delighted acquiescence.

Perhaps the example acquired by the Contemporary Art Society has less of this surprise than most, or at least the appropriateness of the interpretation is less unexpected. The effect chosen lends itself less than most to witty allusion; it is more directly studied and indicates a more prolonged and searching meditation, and in consequence it yields a more continuous interest.

For there perhaps we strike the vulnerable point in Matisse's art. His sensibility is so primed that it goes off at the first impulse from the thing seen; and his invention is so ready for all emergencies that there is no temptation to him to probe the appearances more deeply. The result is that the emotional experience he records is rather superficial and the first shock of surprise and pleasure can never be repeated with the same force. In all the qualities here enumerated Matisse reminds me of Veronese, who displays the same astonishing gift of interpreting the intricacies of nature into a few terms capable of being stated with extreme simplicity. His pictorial idiom has something of the same abbreviated allusiveness and his colour schemes a similar freshness and evocative power and the same applicability to decorative ends. Bonnard arrives at a somewhat similar surface unity as Matisse, though his patterns have not quite the same curious and odd felicity, but like Matisse he generally contrives to decorate the surface of his canvas. But he does not sacrifice quite so much to this end. He is more intrigued by appearances; he is led on to more probing inquiries; he is more sensitive to all sorts of further implications; he waits longer to find his synthesis, and insists on its embracing a far wider range of experience. We shall, however, be able to estimate his contribution more precisely at the forthcoming exhibition of his works at the Independent Gallery.

Derain's art disquiets me more and more. With each succeeding work he seems determined to prove that he is essentially a mannerist. He is, of course, never a plodding nor a ridiculous mannerist; he gives his own special and extremely up-to-date version of the manners he adopts. At times his method might almost be described as that of parody were it not that he aims rather at impressing than amusing us. Thus the large still-life (No. 5) might almost be called a parody of certain ideas of space, of certain harmonies of colour, of certain arrangements of light used by the seventeenth-century Spaniards. Its effect comes from exaggerating the enclosing space, from systematizing the colour and simplifying the illumination. No doubt it is impressive, but at the same time we have a suspicion that we are being imposed on, that the impressiveness is not the result of a conviction but of a calculated method. There is on view at this moment at Messrs. Dutuit's a *Magnasco* which affords a most amusing comment on Derain's and Vlaminck's recent work. The colour and the handling of the accented high-lights are curiously similar, only in *Magnasco*'s case these idioms are used for a frankly melodramatic purpose. That is where these two moderns are in danger of landing. One may prophesy that Vlaminck will get there first, if indeed he is not already a melodramatist, though neither of his works in the present exhibition give one the slightest hint of this.

De Segonzac claims more study than space here permits. I will only invite attention to the very serious and admirably worked out design of "Les Buveurs" (No. 11), which is certainly one of the finest as well as the most ambitious of all his works. In some of his later works he shows the tendency, common to many of these painters, to arrive at a synthesis rather prematurely and by means of a too wilful exclusion of material.

Utrillo is seen, in two Parisian landscapes, in a mood of tender and exquisitely subtle sensibility. Corot, one feels, would not have disowned such progeny.

ROGER FRY.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

SIR BARRY JACKSON'S experiment of producing Shakespeare in modern dress might be more successful if it were better made than it is in "Macbeth" at the Court Theatre. I agree with the commentator in the programme when he says that last year's similarly treated production of "Hamlet" enabled one to appreciate Hamlet as a human being rather than as the philosophical abstraction which most "traditional" productions tend to make him; and I would add that never before had I been made to realize so clearly what a good drama "Hamlet" is. But "Macbeth" is quite a different kettle of fish. In the first place it does not lend itself nearly as well to retailoring, because its effect depends so greatly on the primitive and the supernatural. Secondly, the characterization is immensely inferior to that of "Hamlet," so that the difficulty in differentiating between the characters is increased. And finally there is the insurmountable—or at any rate here unsurmounted—objection that modern war is not waged as it was in Shakespeare's time, let alone Macbeth's. Considerable ingenuity has been exercised to overcome these difficulties, but the play's two most important qualities, its poetry and its impressiveness, are almost entirely obscured. This failure does not, I think, amount to the failure of the experiment, but is due to the manner in which the experiment has been made. The acting is largely either second-rate "Shakespearean" or fair-to-middling drawing-room melodrama—each incompatible with the other, and neither within an octave of the note which the production is intended to strike. A notable exception is Miss Mary Merrall's Lady Macbeth, fine in execution and often original in conception, while the Malcolm of Mr. Laurence Olivier and the Scottish Porter of Mr. Frank Pettingell are definitely good. Mr. Eric Maturin's Macbeth is just a book of the words and not always the right words. Later on we are to see a modern-clothes "Taming of the Shrew," which should give Sir Barry's treatment a much fairer chance; but it must be better cast than "Macbeth."

* * *

Those of us to whom it had been whispered that Mr. C. K. Munro's admirable play "The Rumour" had been condensed and revised for production in the commercial theatre were naturally a little disturbed to hear that a new play dealing with the League of Nations was to be produced at Wyndham's Theatre, and that the author was Captain Reginald Berkeley, who should be capable of writing authoritatively on the subject. These fears, however, have proved groundless, and Mr. Munro's international pitch is not in the least danger of being queered. "Listeners" is merely a crook play with a Geneva background, and by no means convincingly Geneva. On the whole it compares unfavourably with Sardou where it essays the Sardouesque, and is superior to the average thriller in that, apart from the supreme improbability of the background, there are fewer improbabilities and inconsistencies than is usual with this school of drama. Mr. Leon M. Lion and Mr. Nicholas Hannen would to my mind have been better cast in each other's parts, but their high-diplomatic duel of wits is not unamusing, and they are aided by a capable if not a distinguished cast.

Mr. Edgar Wallace's entertainment, "The Yellow Mask," at the Carlton, is indeed a most "sumptuous" affair. One authority has told us that it cost £15,000 to produce. This is not difficult to believe, for the scenery is on the grandest scale, and the town has seldom seen a costlier wardrobe. The dresses, though mostly, I thought, very ugly, clothe a most efficient chorus, who through the evening command as much applause as the leading actors. Though at times one was bewildered by the kaleidoscopic changes of scene and plot, it may be said, at once, that "The Yellow Mask" is very good fun indeed. Mr. Wallace has taken all the popular ingredients of musical comedy and of Drury Lane melodrama which his fertile mind can best make use of. The raid on the Crown jewels has been used as a subject before—but he presents it again in fine style. Indeed there are few incidents and few characters in the piece which are not familiar, but the whole thing swings along so merrily from pantomime to melodrama that it never fails to produce good entertainment. The actors carried their parts bravely. Miss Phyllis Dare has the gift of constant youth and grace—but she has more gifts than those. When she was born other stars were doomed to be danced off the stage—and now she is in her maturity nine-tenths of them might go to her for lessons in acting. Mr. Bobby Howes is a most pleasant comedian (see below), and you could not imagine a more creepily villainous villain than Mr. Malcolm Keen makes of his Chinese governor. Altogether I would be willing to bet that backers of "The Yellow Mask" get their money back and a bit for the teapot as well.

* * *

Whatever view one may take of the propriety or otherwise of the war as a subject for the film, it must be admitted that "The Guns of Loos"—trade shown at the Plaza last week—is one of the best of its kind yet seen. It seems a pity that so much fine native effort may possibly not meet its full reward in view of the declining popularity of war films. This picture, the war scenes of which, I believe, were taken mostly in an Essex chalk pit, is thoroughly realistic and entirely accurate in detail. If such magnificently executed scenes as the saving of the guns, under a German counter attack, fail to move a modern audience one may suppose that they may be held by the sentimental but simply conceived story of rivalry in love. They certainly cannot fail to be struck by the excellence of the acting. Mr. Henry Victor is especially admirable in his distressing sketch of the effects of shell shock—and in his scenes when, being blinded, he returns to appeal to munition workers on strike to go back to their lathes. Mr. Bobby Howes, whom I saw next day in "The Yellow Mask," has the element of pathos in his humour which is the hall-mark of great clowns. He is really very funny in this picture.

* * *

The exhibition of paintings and drawings by Mr. Sickert at the Savile Gallery (7, Stratford Place, Oxford Street) is all the more interesting in that it covers a considerable period of years. One can compare, for instance, "Black-bird of Paradise" and "A Box in the Fenice," both of them splendid portraits of women, and see that Mr. Sickert's style, though it has changed in twenty-five years towards a looser handling of paint, has lost nothing—has rather, indeed, gained—in emotional intensity, sensibility to colour, and quick response to the human and the dramatic. "Suspense" has these qualities: it is not only superb in design and execution and in the subtle suggestion of physical details, but the state of mind of the waiting girl is conveyed with amazing vividness. "Vernet's" and "The Stoker's Paradise" are two of those interior scenes with figures which Mr. Sickert portrays with such exquisite economy and tenderness. His portrait of Mr. Winston Churchill, also, is not only a very good picture; it is remarkable as a study of character, humorous and kindly, and slightly ironic. Two other exhibitions which are worthy of note are at the Independent Gallery (paintings by Bonnard) and at the Leicester Galleries (drawings, lithographs, and woodcuts by Gauguin).

Things to see and hear in the coming week:—

Saturday, February 18th.—

Alexandre Borovsky, Pianoforte Recital, Æolian Hall, 3.

Isolde Menges, Violin Recital, Wigmore Hall, 3.

The Spencer Dyke String Quartet, Victoria and Albert Museum, 3.

Sunday, February 19th.—

Jewish Drama League in "These Internationals," at the Garrick.

Monday, February 20th.—

"The Last Guest," at the "Q."

London Symphony Orchestra, Queen's Hall, 8.

Mr. Roger Fry on Cézanne, at 25, Park Lane, 5 (February 20th, 23rd, and 27th).

Tuesday, February 21st.—

Bach Cantata Club Concert, St. Margaret's, Westminster, 8.15.

Gerald Cooper, Chamber Concert, Æolian Hall, 3.

Erhart String Chamber Concert, Mortimer Hall, 8.30.

Wednesday, February 22nd.—

Sonia Neville, Song Recital, Æolian Hall, 8.15.

Thursday, February 23rd.—

Laurence Binyon reading his own Poems, Poetry Bookshop, 6.

Miss Rose Macaulay, Lecture, Essex Hall, 6.30.

Royal Philharmonic Society's Concert, Queen's Hall, 8.

"Lady Mary," by Frederick Lonsdale and J. Hastings, at Daly's.

Friday, February 24th.—

Poltronieri Quartet (of Italy), Recital, Æolian Hall, 8.15.

OMICRON.

THE MISSEL-THRUSH

THAT missel-thrush

Scorns to alight on a low bush

And as he flies

And tree-top after tree-top tries

His shadow flits

And harmlessly on tree-hole hits.

Shutting his wings

He sways and sings and sways and sings,

Incurious

To see far down under the boughs

A creature come

Aquatic, eel-like and so dumb.

A. J. YOUNG.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

THE ATHENÆUM, FEBRUARY 19TH, 1828.

SKETCHES OF CONTEMPORARY AUTHORS.

No. V.—MR. WORDSWORTH.

WITH what different feelings do we write this name, from those with which it will be seen by (we fear) a large proportion of our readers! A few have read the works of Wordsworth, and disapprove; many have not read them, and therefore condemn; the rest, among whom are we, think of him as of one greater, and purer from vulgar meannesses, than to belong exclusively to our generation, and yet connected with it by deep sympathies, by a thousand gentle and strong associations, and by the noblest moral influence. Wherefore this variety of conviction? Partly because of public taste has been in a large degree formed by very different models from that presented by this great poet; partly because it has been much misled by evil guidance; but chiefly because his poems require in their readers a far more majestic state of feeling, and more active exercise of reason, than are to be found among ordinary men.

OPERAS.

LYRIC THEATRE, Hammersmith. Riverside 3012.
EVENINGS, at 8.15. MATINEES, WED. & SAT., at 2.30.
"THE BEGGAR'S OPERA."
(For a limited number of weeks only.)

THEATRES.

ALDWYCH. (Gerrard 2304-5.)
Nightly at 8.15. Matinees, Wed. and Fri., at 2.30.
"THARK."
TOM WALLS, Mary Brough, and RALPH LYNN.

AMBASSADORS. (Ger. 4460.) EVGS., 8.40. Mats., Tues. & Fri., 2.30.
OWEN NARES in "TWO WHITE ARMS."
By HAROLD DEARDEN. LEON M. LION'S PRODUCTION.

COURT (Sloane 5137.) EVENINGS, 8.30. MATS., THURS., SAT., 2.30.
BARRY JACKSON presents SHAKESPEARE'S
"MACBETH." (In Modern Dress.)
FOR THREE WEEKS ONLY.

CRITERION. (Ger. 3844.) EVENINGS, 8.30. MATS., TUES. & SAT., 2.30.
"MARCH HARES."
ATHENE SEYLER, LESLIE BANKS, and HILDA TREVELYAN.

DRURY LANE. EVGS., 8.15. MATS., WED. and SAT., at 2.30.
"THE DESERT SONG."
HARRY WELCHMAN. EDITH DAY. GENE GERRARD.

FORTUNE THEATRE. Regent 1307. NIGHTLY, at 8.30.
MATINEES, THURSDAY AND SATURDAY, at 2.30.
"ON APPROVAL." By FREDERICK LONSDALE.
ELLIS JEFFREYS. RONALD SQUIRE.

GARRICK THEATRE. Gerrard 9513. "TIN GODS."
A NEW PLAY BY THE AUTHOR OF "POTIPHAR'S WIFE."
Nightly, at 8.40. Mats., Wed. & Sat., at 2.30.
SPECIAL MATINEE TO-DAY, at 2 o'clock prompt
"MAN AND SUPERMAN" in its ENTIRETY.

GATE THEATRE STUDIO, 16a, Villiers Street, Strand.
"THE HAIRY APE."
Annual Subscription, 5s. 6d. Apply Secretary. Chancery 7263.

HIPPODROME, London. Gerrard 0650.
EVENINGS, 8.15. MATS., WEDS., THURS. & SATS., at 2.30.
"HIT THE DECK."
IVY TRESMAND. ALICE MORLEY.
SYDNEY HOWARD. STANLEY HOLLOWAY.

KINGSWAY (Gerr. 4032.) Nightly, 8.15. Mats., Wed., Thurs. & Sat., 2.30.
ANGELA BADDELEY in
"MARIGOLD."

LONDON PAVILION. DAILY, at 2.30 and 8.30. SUNDAYS, at 8 o'clock.
The Greatest Stage and Screen Spectacle.
"UNCLE TOM'S CABIN."
With Unique Stage Show by 40 Coloured Artistes.

"WELDED" by EUGENE O'NEILL
From THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16th.
NIGHTLY AT 8.30.
SUNDAY EVENING
PERFORMANCES.
PLAYROOM SIX
6, NEW COMPTON STREET, W.C.2
For particulars of membership ring
REGENT - - 3988
NO MONDAY
PERFORMANCES.

THEATRES.

PRINCE OF WALES. Gerrard 7482.
NIGHTLY, at 8.15. MATINEES, THURS. & SAT., at 2.15.

"OUTWARD BOUND."
By SUTTON VANE.

PRINCES. **GEORGE ROBEY** in "BITS AND PIECES."
MARIE BLANCHE.
EVENINGS, at 8.30. MATINEES, WED. & SAT., at 2.30.

ROYALTY. (Ger. 2690.) NIGHTLY, 8.40. Mats., Thurs., Sat., 2.30.
"THE CROOKED BILLET." By DION TITHERADGE.
Leon Quartermaine, Mercia Swinburne, Barbara Gott, C. V. France.

ST. MARTIN'S. Gerr. 3416. Evgs., 8.30 sharp. Mats., Tues. & Fri., 2.30.
"THE SILVER CORD." By SIDNEY HOWARD.
LILIAN BRAITHWAITE. CLARE EAMES. Last Performance, Feb 25th.

SHAFTESBURY. (Gerr. 6666.) NIGHTLY, at 8.30.
MATINEES, WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY, at 2.30.
"THE HIGH ROAD." By FREDERICK LONSDALE.

STRAND. (Ger. 3830.) Nightly at 8.30. Mats., Thurs. & Sat., at 2.30.
"JUDITH OF ISRAEL."
A Biblical Drama by Emanuel de Marnay Baruch.
LEWIS, CASSON and SYBIL THORNDIKE

WINTER GARDEN. (Ger. 0416.) At 8.30. Mats., Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
"QUEST."
HEATHER THATCHER. HUGH WAKEFIELD.
"THE PLAY OF 330 LAUGHS."—Daily Mail.

WYNDHAM'S THEATRE. Regent 3028
NIGHTLY, at 8.20. MATINEES, WED. & SAT., at 2.30.
"LISTENERS." By REGINALD BERKELEY.
LEON M. LION. NICHOLAS HANNEN.

CINEMAS.

CAPITOL, Haymarket. CONTINUOUS, 1 to 11. SUNDAYS, 6 to 11.
Commencing Monday, February 20th.
Exclusive Premier Presentation of
GLORIA SWANSON in her latest success,
"SADIE THOMPSON."

PHILHARMONIC HALL. Gt. Portland Street. (Mayfair 0606.)
"THE KING OF KINGS."
DAILY, at 2.30, 6.0, and 8.30. (Sunday, at 6.0 and 8.30.)
Prices (inc. Tax): 5/9, 3/6 (reserved), 2/4, 1/2 (unreserved).

STOLL PICTURE THEATRE, Kingsway. (Holborn 3703.)
DAILY, 2 to 10.45. (SUNDAYS, 6 to 10.30.)
Feb. 20th, 21st & 22nd. JANET GAYNOR in "7TH HEAVEN" (from the Stage Play); Eddie Cantor in "SPECIAL DELIVERY."
Feb. 23rd, 24th & 25th. CORINNE GRIFFITH in "THE LADY IN ERMINE"; FLORENCE VIDOR in "THE WORLD AT HER FEET," etc.
On the Stage: GWEN LEWIS, Contralto.

ART EXHIBITIONS.

THE LEICESTER GALLERIES, Leicester Square, 10-6.
1. PAUL GAUGUIN—Drawings, Woodcuts, and Lithographs.
2. D. BOMBERG—Palestine and Petra Pictures.
3. LEON DE SMET—Flower Paintings, etc.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

WHO ARE THE CRIMINALS ?

THE latest volume in "Notable British Trials" is "Trial of the Duchess of Kingston," edited by Lewis Melville (Hodge, 10s. 6d.). The life of Elizabeth Chudleigh, who was the Countess of Bristol and bigamously married the Duke of Kingston, has been told quite recently very brightly by Miss Curtis Brown in the "Representative Women" series (Gerald Howe, 3s. 6d.). On Monday, April 22nd, 1776, the fifth day of her trial for bigamy before her Peers, one hundred and seventeen Noble Lords gave their judgment, of whom one hundred and sixteen answered "Guilty, upon my honour," and one, the Duke of Newcastle, answered "Guilty erroneously, but not intentionally." The lady had it both ways, for if she were not the Duchess of Kingston, she was certainly the Countess of Bristol and a Peeress, and so she claimed "the benefit of Peerage," which meant in effect that she could not be punished for a felony whether by being burnt in the hand or imprisoned. Their Lordships granted her claim, and Elizabeth Chudleigh passed out of their hands and out of England to live for many years upon the Continent vigorously and scandalously, until, at the age of sixty-nine, after eating a brace of partridges and swallowing two large bumpers of Madeira, she flew into a violent rage, broke a blood-vessel, and expired. The Duke of Newcastle, in his muddled way, was, I think, right. The reckless and scandalous Elizabeth, who used to plunge her feet into cold water in order to cure the gout, all through her life was "guilty erroneously but not intentionally." In other words, she at any rate was not a criminal.

* * *

At first sight the heroes of four volumes in a new series just published are of a very different character. The series is "The Famous Trials Series," edited by George Dilnot and published by Mr. Geoffrey Bles (10s. 6d. each). The volumes are an excellent beginning, well bound, well printed, and well edited and written. In "The Thaw Case," by F. A. Mackenzie, and "The Peltzer Case," by Gérard Harry, the method is mainly narrative, though considerable extracts from the evidence are given. In the other two books, "The Trial of Patrick Mahon," with introduction by Edgar Wallace, and "The Trial of Professor Webster," by George Dilnot, the verbatim report of the trial is printed. Of all the volumes, that which deals with the Thaw case is the most interesting. Not that there is any great interest criminologically in the story and trial of Harry Thaw; their importance is sociological, and the reader of this volume in 1928 is perpetually haunted by the ghosts of Sacco and Vanzetti. Thaw may have been sane or he may have been insane; he was certainly by all the ordinary standards of civilized life a criminal. But he was also a millionaire. On June 25th, 1906, he went to the Madison Square Roof Garden with his wife and two friends. At another table in the Garden was sitting the architect, Stanford White, whose mistress Mrs. Thaw had been several years before. Later in the evening, Thaw and his party started to leave the Garden, but he turned back, walked up to White, and shot him twice through the brain and once through the body. He was tried for murder. The case was not a difficult one. He was either sane and guilty or he was insane. The defence in court was that he was insane; but he had another defence outside the court; he was also a millionaire. It is stated in this book that experts

estimated that the Thaw family spent nearly one million dollars on the case. Nothing which money could do was left undone. "The defence set out to create a feeling of public sympathy for Thaw. A well-known author was secured as Press agent. The Thaw family even financed a play, written around the 'unwritten law.'" And in the end, after nine years, the Thaw millions won. It is well worth while to read the story of their triumph in this book. At the first trial, which was described by an American "Committee on the Commitment and Discharge of the Criminal Insane" as a "disgraceful farce," the jury disagreed, seven voting for a verdict of murder, and five for acquittal on the ground of insanity. At the second trial Thaw was acquitted on the ground of insanity and sent to a State asylum for the criminal insane. For the next five years the Thaw family attempted to secure the release of Thaw by getting him declared to be now legally sane. They were not successful. A New York "gang" was therefore hired, the asylum staff corrupted, Thaw was "rescued" and conveyed across the frontier into Canada. The Canadian authorities dumped him back on to American territory. He was rearrested, acquitted on a charge of conspiracy, and finally in June, 1915, declared by a jury in the Supreme Court to be sane. The Thaw millions had won, and Thaw and the foreman of the jury were photographed together. The millionaire, who, to quote the American Committee, "commits a foul and cowardly murder in a public resort," regained his liberty. The other side of the medal was seen, some ten years later, when the two Italian Socialists, suspected of having shot a policeman, in the face of grave doubt as to their guilt, were condemned to death and executed.

* * *

Turn to the remarkable Peltzer case and you will find it still more puzzling to answer categorically who are the criminals. There seems to be no doubt that Léon Peltzer, out of gratitude to his brother Armand and at his instigation, murdered Guillaume Bernays, with whose wife, Julie, Armand was in love. The way in which the murder was planned and the elaborate fabrication, before the crime, of the imaginary murderer, Henry Vaughan, were extremely clever. The psychology of Léon is to me incomprehensible. He and Armand were tried in 1882; they were found guilty and condemned to death, but the sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life. Armand died about two years later, and Léon Peltzer remained in prison for thirty years before he was released on condition that he left Belgium and lived abroad. M. Harry, who has written an admirable account of the trial, was largely responsible for Léon's release, and kept in touch with him afterwards. He tells a tragic story of Léon's life, under the name of Albert Preitelle, in a Bloomsbury boarding-house, at Brighton and on a tea estate in Ceylon, and finally of his suicide only five years ago. According to M. Harry, this man, who in 1882 had killed Bernays in cold blood, not for his own sake or for anything that he might get out of the murder, but in order to please his brother, this man, who took the entire blame for the deed upon himself and never ceased to protest that his far more guilty brother was innocent, in 1912 could not be trusted to look after the workers on the tea estate "because he had too kind a heart"!

LEONARD WOOLF.

REVIEWS

FICTION

- Cullum.** By E. ARNOT ROBERTSON. (Cape. 7s. 6d.)
Islanders. By PEADAR O'DONNELL. With an Introduction by ROBERT LYND. (Cape. 6s.)
All or Nothing. By J. D. BERESFORD. (Collins. 7s. 6d.)
An Artist in the Family. By SARAH GERTRUDE MILLIN. (Constable. 6s.)
Last Post. By FORD MADDOX FORD. (Duckworth. 7s. 6d.)
The Babyons. A Family Chronicle. By CLEMENCE DANE. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)
The Unburied Dead. By STEPHEN MCKENNA. (Thornton Butterworth. 7s. 6d.)
So Much Good. By GILBERT FRANKAU. (Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.)
The Poor Gentleman. By IAN HAY. (Hodder & Stoughton. 7s. 6d.)
The Best Short Stories of 1927. 1.—English. 2.—American. Edited by EDWARD J. O'BRIEN. (Cape. 7s. 6d. each.)

THE first two books in this list are by new writers, and show exceptional promise. "Cullum," as its author attempts something difficult with a large measure of success, deserves perhaps the greater credit. The book is essentially a study of one charming but unreliable figure, who almost involuntarily dramatizes himself and in consequence is fated to disappoint most of his friends. The skill with which Miss Robertson makes his enigmatical character unfold, exhibiting its charm at the beginning and gradually preparing us for its treachery, is quite remarkable. Towards the end, however, Cullum's development is somewhat too hurried, and the conclusion itself is both melodramatic and out of character. A man who always found a way out for himself would scarcely have taken his own life; far more likely he would have continued to deceive other people and himself until he died at a ripe and disreputable age. Several of the characters, indeed, are somewhat melodramatized towards the end: Esther, the narrator, who like Cullum is an admirable study, Ropes, the doctor, who, however, is never very convincing. But making every allowance for those faults, this is a very notable first novel. The author falls into none of the faults which beset those who try to portray complex characters: impressionism, mystery-mongering, confusion of proportions. The statement is always firm and lucid, and up to the last few chapters the proportions are admirable. The whole love episode between Esther and Cullum is psychologically convincing, and the style throughout has measure and precision.

"Islanders" is remarkable, on the other hand, for an exquisite simplicity both in its matter and its style. It convinces us by being as simple as the most simple things. The style effaces itself so successfully that the objects it describes seem to reveal themselves without the intervention of any intermediary element. This does not mean that Mr. O'Donnell's share in the result is slight or negative; it implies, on the contrary, great discipline and integrity. What we see through this almost transparent medium is the life of an island of fisher people, storms and bad times, courtship, marriage, and death. Mr. Lynd says truly in his admirable preface that the island "is a part at once of the geography of the earth and of the world of imagination." The only false figure in it is the doctor's sister, who belongs to a different class from the other characters, and is wholly absurd. But the island people—Mary Doogan and her family, Biddy Melly, a mere sketch but a masterly one, Susan, Phil, and a dozen more—are at once so obviously and so profoundly true that we never doubt them. This is a distinguished piece of work with only one serious flaw.

The theme of "All or Nothing" is ambitious, and Mr. Beresford has not mastered it; but the book is so good in some ways and so bad in others that Mr. Beresford's case becomes a very interesting one. The story is really a study of the spiritual development of one man. He has immense wealth and no inclination towards any special vocation. Sport, literature, politics, philosophy: he feels that his interest in these would very soon become exhausted; and he waits for more than twenty years for a moment of illumination which, he is convinced, will tell him what he must do. In the earlier scenes, while he is waiting for his moment, there are some fine passages, and the state which precedes the final illumination is described, if not with supreme

imaginative power, at any rate with great intellectual tact and discernment. It is in trying to convey the quality of the illumination that Mr. Beresford fails most disastrously. One result of the mystical change is that the hero gives away his personal property and goes to live in poverty in Camden Town. That is conceivable; such things have been done; but what is quite inconceivable is that anyone who ever had a mystical experience should express himself in the clichés which Mr. Beresford puts into his hero's mouth. One does not know whether everything here has been over-simplified, or not simplified enough; at any rate all this part of the book rings false and gives the impression that Mr. Beresford is no longer writing about things he knows, but merely about things he wishes to know. Yet that his knowledge is wide there is proof everywhere in this book. Has it overleapt itself? Or is it impossible, for some reason, to portray a mystic in a work of imagination? This, in any case, if an interesting, is a decisive failure to do so.

Mrs. Millin fails as completely with her artist in "An Artist in the Family" as Mr. Beresford does with his mystic. Most failures of this kind are probably due to a simple misconception: that an artist or a mystic can be presented in a work of imagination simply *qua* artist or mystic, without being shown on the purely human plane, as a character. Only as a character, as a human type purely, can any figure gain entrance into the world of imagination. The business man, the member of Parliament, the painter, the poet: these in themselves are mere stock figures; they only become real for the imagination when they are seen as human beings. Mrs. Millin does not see her Theo as a human being, but as an exaggerated popular type, and in consequence her story is largely make-believe. The everyday characters, the father and mother, the various relations, are cleverly and convincingly drawn. The family is quite satisfactory, but the artist spoils everything.

In "Last Post" Mr. Ford's treatment of the theme seems to be unnecessarily messy and chaotic. The author is neither a profound nor a subtle psychologist; his view of life is simple, the view of the man in the street; his characters are comprehensible enough: the simple, honest, misunderstood Tietjens, Sylvia, the conventional thoroughbred who has gone off the rails, Tietjens's mistress, the typical intelligent and unimaginative Englishwoman, a typical American snob, and a few others. They are all very competently drawn, but they are all stock figures; Mr. Ford has never seized the reality behind the mask. Yet the method he has chosen is one which can only be used with effect by a writer who knows all the secret thoughts of his characters; it is the method of thought-association and curious reverie, which is as old as the hills, but has lately been universally taken up as if it were a novelty, and as if its employment were meritorious whether the theme or the bent of the writer called for it or not. But as he is neither a curious nor a subtle writer, in enveloping his theme in confusion Mr. Ford has not succeeded in evoking a sense of the confusion of life, which is entralling, but has merely raised an artificial psychological hubbub which obscures and retards the action, and irritates the reader. The style is loose, the psychology commonplace; and the whole, indeed, is a disappointing pendant to a meritorious if far too wordy trilogy.

"The Babyons" is a series of four stories tracing the influences which mould the lives of several generations of a family. The first story begins in the eighteenth century, the last ends in the present one. Among the influences are a ghost and a strain of insanity; and whether the author intends either her conception of heredity or her psychic phenomena to be taken seriously we simply do not know. There are signs that the book is intended as a serious imaginative work; but it is impossible to reconcile the intention with the performance. As a thriller the story would be more satisfactory without the sociological trimmings; as a study of heredity or fate it is invalidated by the fact that one cannot accept seriously either the terms employed or the conclusions drawn. The whole, indeed, is inappropriately melodramatic: the style, the characters, the dialogue, the theme; and here the author seems obviously to have treated a subject quite unsuited to her talents.

Both "The Unburied Dead" and "So Much Good" possess the merit of presenting one character with vigour and truth. The heroine in both stories is well drawn; but the

background is sentimental melodrama. "The Poor Gentleman" is a pleasantly written adventure story, but why had the author to call his villains Bolsheviks? It seems to show a lack of invention. However, nobody writes the light adventure story better than this writer.

The two volumes of 1927 short stories edited by Mr. O'Brien make up a very good collection.

EDWIN MUIR.

THE PROBLEM OF THE FRIARS

Five Centuries of Religion. By G. G. COULTON. Vol. II.—**The Friars and the Dead Weight of Tradition, 1200-1400 A.D.** (Cambridge University Press. 31s. 6d.)

THE great interest of the history of the friars in the Middle Ages lies in the fact that it poses in a simple form a problem which constantly recurs in the history of mankind and has every appearance of being insoluble. The problem is that of the compatibility between an inspiration and an institution. It is raised on a wider scale by the history of Christianity in general, for St. Francis bears to the Franciscan Order the same relation that Christ bears to the Christian Church. In each case there springs up in the world an individual flame of spiritual genius. It draws followers; they become many; they have to be organized;—and subtly, inevitably the flame is dimmed and dies, or (more accurately) becomes transmuted into something often fine but always different. What has Christ with his dream of love to do with the organized Christian Church? It is true that the Church has tremendous achievements in the history of civilization to its credit, but they are, as it were, by-products. St. Francis, with his dream of poverty, what has become of him in the Franciscan Order? It is true that the Franciscan Order can point to some of the greatest scholars of the Middle Ages, but they, too, are by-products. The wind of inspiration bloweth where it listeth; the genius of Christ and of St. Francis can perpetually recreate itself as an inspiration to individual hearts, but the difference between mechanical and spiritual invention appears to be that the latter is not susceptible of mass production.

The shadow of this fundamental problem lies behind all the special causes for the decline of the mediæval Church in general and of the Franciscan Order in particular from the ideals of their founders. Of those special causes one stands out—the disintegrating effect of wealth. With Christ and with Francis, the Church and the friars began in complete personal poverty, and all through the history of Christianity the conception of poverty has been a creative force, bringing about a fresh burst of spiritual life whenever it was reverted to, as it was in the successive monastic movements and by the friars. But individual poverty was not incompatible with communal wealth; and "For he had great possessions" is the final judgment on the mediæval Papacy, the mediæval monks, and even (though Francis tried to obviate this very danger) the mediæval friars. Dr. Coulton's new book is devoted to a diagnosis of this process; unlike most writers on the friars, he passes swiftly over the personality of St. Francis, and instead analyses the conditions which produced his revolutionary movement and the reasons for which it failed in all except its by-products. In Dr. Coulton's view the movement was the expression of a strong reaction against the character of contemporary monasticism; and he begins with a group of chapters designed to illustrate the wealth and worldliness of the monks, discussing in turn the abbot as baron, the monk as squire, the relations between the monks and their peasants, and the contemporary criticism directed against them. Against this "monastic capitalism" a frontal attack was made by Joachim and other precursors of the friars, and at last by St. Francis himself, "naked, following the naked Christ." In these central chapters the course of the movement is set out, its merits appraised, and the reasons for its swift decay analysed. In the third section of his book Dr. Coulton leaves the friars and reverts to the history of monasticism. He points out that one incidental result of the movement was to give an impetus to the system of episcopal visitation of monastic houses, which allows him to draw an admirable picture of the great reforming Bishop Odo Rigaldi of Rouen. There follows a very useful and detailed discussion of the

methods of visitation and the evidential value of those visitation documents, which he has done more than any other historian to introduce to the public, together with a long account of the sensational three-cornered struggle between the monks of Evesham, their hated abbot, and the Bishop of Worcester at the beginning of the thirteenth century.

Dr. Coulton's book has the unique combination of merits and the single defect which we have come to expect from his writings. The first merit is a learning whose breadth is extraordinary; there can be hardly any original source relating to mediæval monasticism in England, France, the Netherlands, Germany, and Italy, which he has not read, and his knowledge of the work of modern historians is equally wide. Combined with this learning is a delightful style and a capacity for communicating his own absorbing interest in his subject and for making the thirteenth century seem as alive as the twentieth. It is a great thing that there should be at least one historian who is not afraid to undertake a work of general synthesis on a vast subject, to write it as literature, and to keep his eye upon the needs of a wide reading public; and it is not a common thing, in these days when historical research has nearly killed history and when our best historians content themselves with producing learned monographs for each other, like the community in the political economy book who earned a precarious livelihood by taking in one another's washing.

The one defect of Dr. Coulton's work is familiar to his readers, and increases rather than decreases with his successive books. It is the tone of controversy which pervades them. The reason for this controversial tone and for his concentration upon the dark side of mediæval civilization is a perfectly understandable anger at the uncritical and tendentious writings of certain Catholic and Anglican historians, who stress only the bright side. Yet it is doubtful whether the business of controverting them is worth the fire and energy which convert Dr. Coulton's books into shell-strewn battlefields, or indeed whether the controversy is most effectively carried out by these methods. No sensible man or woman is really taken in by brilliant pictures of the Middle Ages as a golden era of faith and Christian practice. The mediæval ideal interests them, because all ideals are interesting; but as to practice, they know too much about the gulf between theory and practice to-day to believe that the two were identical in the thirteenth century. They turn upon mediæval religion the same eye which they turn upon modern democracy; they are convinced that human nature was much the same then as now. "The mainspring of mediæval religious intolerance," says Dr. Coulton, "was not faith in the Pauline sense, but a belief often mingled with misgivings, behind a façade of absolute conviction." But of what dominant creed in any age is this not true? It is equally true (for example) of Victorian morality. The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and in an introspective age there are few readers, however uninformed, who do not look in their hearts when they read history. But in this book controversy intrudes too often. There are forty-one appendices (all carefully packed), and there is a catena of hostile generalizations occupying two chapters and amplified in an appendix where the most damning sentences already quoted are printed in leaded type, so that "fornication," "keep concubines publicly," "reprobate and apostate" leap out of the page at the unlucky reader like Lord Kitchener's finger in the recruiting poster. It is a great pity; the effect is comic or irritating, according to one's frame of mind; and, in any case, what do these generalizations prove? It is natural that recorded blame should outweigh recorded praise. Man is a reforming animal; if he writes about an institution, in nine cases out of ten (then as now) he writes to criticize, and not to praise; but this does not prove that the institution, for all its enormous weaknesses, may not still have a balance on the right side. It really would be a great deal easier to discover on which side that balance lay if Dr. Coulton were a little more objective. As it is, the reader (enthralled, as he must be, from beginning to end of the book) is left wondering whether he has really been reading about five centuries of religion or about five centuries of the inevitable failings of human nature, trying to embody in flesh or stone, institution or word, an ideal which, to its everlasting credit, is always far too high for it.

EILEEN POWER.

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL

History of the First International. By G. M. STEKLOFF. Translated by EDEN and CEDAR PAUL. (Martin Lawrence, 12s. 6d.)

ENGLISHMEN are naturally supercilious about international socialism. It has played little part in our history. The English trade unions of the 'sixties had no time to waste on the study of "ideologies." Besides, they knew the disease. They had had it themselves in the 'thirties, and were now immune. If you approach the records of the "First International" in this spirit, it is easy to make merry over their unconscious humour. Alternatively you may, like the Webbs, consign the whole story to a footnote. Both views are false. The "First International" was not ridiculous, nor was it insignificant. M. Stekloff will make this clear to us if we will let him, which is not as easy as it sounds. Before long, we shall be smiling at his long architectural treatises on Spanish castles, his recognition of the obsessions of a few eccentrics as "an instinctive, tempestuous, and elemental impulse of the proletarian masses," his solemn anathemas hurled at the heads of those "reactionary ideologues of petty-bourgeois utopism," the followers of Proudhon. But when we see his brows contract and his colour mount, we must hasten to reassure him. We were thinking of something else. Will he please go on. We are anxious to hear more. Forbearance will be rewarded, for those very qualities at which we were smiling help him to bring vividly before our eyes the outstanding facts of the story, namely, the greatness of Karl Marx and the creation by him through the International of that socialist tradition which, in one form or another, to-day inspires the Labour movement of every country in the world.

In the 'thirties and 'forties of last century Europe was riddled with secret societies, and in spite of the intensely national feelings of these rebels and patriots, a spirit of brotherhood was born, and in the queer cosmopolitan gatherings of refugees there was talk of the emancipation of oppressed mankind. To these spoke first Flora Tristan, descendant of Montezuma, and then Karl Marx, in the Communist Manifesto of 1848, calling on them to find a more compelling bond of union in their common subjection to the power of capital. From these roots sprang the International Workingmen's Association, founded in 1864, as the result of a friendly meeting of the heirs of Chartism with the followers of Proudhon, to offer help and encouragement to the persecuted Poles.

From the first the Association was dominated by Marx, who, step by step, advanced the standard of Communism over the ground contested by the devotees of co-operation and democratic radicalism. The aim of the Association was to use all means to prepare for the social revolution by which the workers should seize administrative power with the object of founding the Collectivist State. In this form the International, though commanding few direct adherents and practically no funds, became the focus of labour activities throughout Europe. Even English unions invoked its help to prevent the import of foreign "blacklegs," and in other countries, where trade unionism was weak or non-existent, it was in the name of the International that Labour fought the battle of hours and wages in the stormy years 1866-1868. Then appeared the division in the ranks. The anarchism of Bakunin was gathering strength, and in the years following the tragic failure of the Paris Commune it shivered the Association to fragments, bringing the work to an inglorious end.

The conflict was partly one of personalities. Bakunin advocated anarchism within the International itself, and Marx was a natural disciplinarian. But the causes lay deeper, as Stekloff makes abundantly clear. Marx's strategy was designed for the war between capital and labour inherent in modern industrialism. But Bakunin represented those recruits—and they were a strong section—who came from Russia, Italy, and Spain, where modern industrialism was unknown. "In Italy," said a delegate, "every one works for himself and upon his own account." What affinity could such men have with the Marxian class-war? These countries, explains Stekloff, were just emerging from mediævalism, and the anarchists mistook the birthpangs of the bourgeois State for the first stirrings of the proletarian revolution. Bakunin's friends were not represen-

tative wage-earners, but a union of middle-class visionaries with the riff-raff of the slums. "Anarchism," said one of the British Communists, "is tantamount to individualism," and he was right. It was the individualism of the Renaissance warped by contact with the later economic civilization of its neighbours.

There was a second cause of failure. Marx aimed at the seizure of the machinery of the State by the workers. This implied action within the national State by national associations concentrating on their own problems. When this stage was reached, the International could be no more than a liaison committee. And, in fact, as the national trade unions gained ground, the International weakened. Bakunin denounced all preparatory organization. Society should be shattered by the explosive force of his inspired message.

With the Hague Conference of 1872, and the transference of the General Council to New York, the International sank into obscurity. In the second part of the book the author traces the degeneration of the Anarchist Association which remained into a gang of infatuated conspirators, hardly to be distinguished from the anarchists of melodrama, "isolated desperadoes, lone wolves, infuriated by persecution."

The translators' claim that this is a "definitive" history cannot be admitted, principally because a most important source for the years 1866 to 1869, namely, the Minute Book of the General Council, was unknown to the Author.

T. H. MARSHALL.

A DANISH AUTHOR

Hans Andersen the Man. By ELITH REUMERT. Translated from the Danish by JESSIE BRÖCHNER. (Methuen, 10s. 6d.)

To English people Hans Christian Andersen is little more than a name tacked on to very fine fairy stories. Nearly everybody has read something of his work; but very few know anything of his personality or life. He was not, as some people think, a German, but a Dane who achieved fame abroad long before he was accepted in his own country. Elith Reumert, who is an enthusiastic admirer of Hans Andersen, has sought to give a general survey of his life and character. The book is not a biography in any real sense of the word. Rather is it a kind of biographical patchwork—a series of pictures, experiences, and characteristics divided into chapters such as "Andersen and Women," "Andersen and Children," "Jenny Lind," "Restlessness and Caprice."

It is an uncritical work, almost detracting to Hans Andersen by reason of its extravagant eulogies. When Elith Reumert (presumably faithfully translated by Jessie Bröchner) writes: "It is only natural that Andersen's unbounded imagination, &c.," and on another page, "His stupendous imagination and his poetic gifts played him many tricks in everyday life," and in yet another place, "His mighty, unbridled imagination which to him as a poet was the greatest gift of his genius, &c.," the criticizing faculty feels hit below the belt. If such superlatives are necessary to describe the genius of Hans Andersen, what must we say of a Blake, a Shelley, a Dante, a Shakespeare? Nothing at all, for the counters of language have been played out.

Hans Andersen had imagination, but it was neither stupendous nor unbridled. He has written no "Inferno," no "Prophetic Books." But his work has been beloved by children and intelligent illiterates rather than by highbrows; and he will not easily be forgotten. He was a childlike man, somewhat elfish, yet clever in his half-sophistication. His work was happier in spirit than his life, beset, as it was, by much melancholy brooding and the irritations of his career. He was born in wretched poverty, and struggled with poverty all through childhood and youth. After he became famous he was beset by many jealousies and much misrepresentation. He had the visions and perceptions of a true poet; and he was vain, sensitive, amiable, charitable, and ungainly. Also, he was very restless, never happier than when travelling or temporarily settled in a new locality. He inhabited a world of dreams, not very profound dreams, yet sufficiently full of airy palaces to mark him off for distinc-

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tion among the philistines whom he interested and amused. His best work was touched with imagination, and he had many powers of fancy and a streak of pure genius.

This book about him ought to have been quite a good book, but it is marred by much slipshod writing, besides being padded, in places, with inconsequent chatter about nothing in particular. Also, Elith Reumert keeps intimating that it is *wrong* to say anything derogatory of a dead writer once his work has been universally accepted and admired. Therefore it is wrong to suggest that Hans Andersen's relations with so many admiring and sympathetic women were other than chaste, and it is wrong to be too hard on him for his vanity. As a matter of fact Hans Andersen seems to have been nearly sexless, while his vanity, as much as his unusual sensitiveness, caused him often to drink the cup of chagrin to the dregs.

Despite its padding and discursiveness the book contains some interesting material. Besides, in parts, it is exasperatingly interesting as an unconscious revelation of the bad habits of mind rife in Northern Europe during the reign of Queen Victoria.

WOODROW WILSON

Woodrow Wilson. Life and Letters. By RAY STANNARD BAKER. 2 vols. (Heinemann. 36s.)

THE personal greatness of President Wilson was like a brief sunset on a wintry day. To think of it now is like looking into an old diary and finding the words "Wonderful sunset to-night." It must have been so! It may even be that this particular sunset has passed into one's soul, and that, having seen it, one is a better judge of other scenes of beauty and rightness—but the eye of the mind cannot recall it. For a time Woodrow Wilson was the most eminent human being on earth. He was the undoubted hope of the world. He was Gladstone again, but unprecedented chance had made him to all mankind what Gladstone was only to a fraction. Moreover, it seemed that we were to have from him not only great profit but some pleasure. He was one of those statesmen who, in Burke's phrase, "sacrifice to the graces," and his speeches were notable not only for momentous content but for great charm. And then at the Peace Conference something went wrong with the man. Some have said that he had been made too proud; others, that he was only a professor; others, again, that the problem was too big for any man, and the rooms in Paris too hot! We do not doubt that, when Mr. Ray Stannard Baker comes to his closing chapters, he will throw more light upon it and tell us, from out of the innermost man, how it happened that we watched at the same moment the birth of the League of Nations and the blight of its founder. The two volumes before us carry the reader to the point at which Wilson's long academic career ended and he entered upon American politics. The rest will follow. Mr. Stannard Baker is performing his heavy task with great skill, and has now given us a full and most vivid account of the beginnings of a great man.

We fear that the "Big Bills" who are just now making a fresh assertion of American Independence will find matter for some vexation in Mr. Stannard Baker's admirable description of Woodrow Wilson's youth. It might very nearly be the portrait of some promising English boy in the Victorian age. The schools and colleges which Wilson attended were, of course, of the American pattern. But these seem to have had very little effect in the making of his mind, which was formed and shaped rather by the home in which he lived, the books which he read, and the men he admired. And we find in each of these three influences a strong English flavour. Our own Sir John Simon would recognize every line in the account of Woodrow Wilson's early home, so closely associated with the Presbyterian Church that the family pew was like yet another room in the house. It was our own country—again—which supplied the house with many of its heroes. In 1873 Wilson—then seventeen years old—had pinned the portrait of Gladstone over his desk, and he was powerfully influenced by the speeches of Bright, by the essays of Bagehot, and by Green's "Short History." It went further than this, for we find him drawing inspiration and stimulus from a source so native to ourselves as the Parliamentary sketches of Sir Henry Lucy.

And, indeed, we are almost tempted to say from these pages of Mr. Stannard Baker's book that America seems, in the 'seventies and 'eighties, to have been as much exposed to English fame as England now is to American films! We have said that it may vex a few people in Chicago that our own Cobdens and Brights and our own Gladstone should have been the models on which a great American largely formed himself, but there is a side from which we may contemplate the fact rather ruefully ourselves. The 'seventies and 'eighties were vintage years of English leadership. Such wine as our public life grows at the moment we need strictly for ourselves and we send little if any abroad!

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EVOLUTION

Evolution. By PROFESSOR E. W. MACBRIDE, M.A., D.Sc., LL.D., F.R.S. (Benn's Sixpenny Library, No. 109.)

Galatea, or The Future of Darwinism. By W. RUSSELL BRAIN, M.A., D.M. (Oxon.), M.R.C.P. (Lond.). (Kegan Paul. 2s. 6d.)

Emergent Evolution and the Social. By WILLIAM MORTON WHEELER, Ph.D., D.S. (Kegan Paul. 2s. 6d.)

The A B C of Evolution. By VANCE RANDOLPH. (Hamilton. 2s. 6d.)

THE appearance, almost simultaneously, of these four small books all concerned with evolution, but differing widely in their treatment of it, is eloquent testimony to the revival of interest in this subject. But it is interest of a very different nature from the embittered controversy between science and religion which began in 1859 with the publication of "The Origin of Species" and continued to the end of the century. Darwin, Wallace, and Huxley fought the great battle of evolution against apparently overwhelming opposition, and with finally complete success; their energies exhausted, the protagonists settled down, religion slowly and painfully to adapt its doctrines to the new conception of man's origin; science, with the arrogance of the victor, to demand the absolute acceptance by a tired world, not only of the incontestable truth of evolution itself, but also of the theories as to its cause.

There is no greater evidence of the genius of Darwin than the manner in which he always remained the master of his theories, nor any clearer proof of the inferiority of his followers than the manner in which they were mastered by theirs, or by those they had inherited from their master. Darwin admitted the possibility that acquired characters might be transmitted, the central doctrine of Lamarck, but to the Neo-Darwinians the very idea is anathema. Indeed, many of them appear, by their writings, to consider that natural selection is the actual cause of evolution—an error widely spread amongst laymen—whereas, of course, this is merely a sieve through which variations are passed, to be retained or rejected. It is the cause of the variations, still the darkest of mysteries, which is motive power in evolution.

The present revival of interest in evolution is concerned, not with the fact of evolution—that is universally accepted—but with the causes of evolution. The intelligence of mankind is beginning to rebel against the god of chance which, according to the Neo-Darwinians, is the master of our destiny and the sole motive power in evolution. Evidence is gradually being accumulated which points to the possibility of acquired characters and habits being inherited, at least under certain conditions, while the crude experiments of Weismann, who cut off the tails of many generations of mice and then pointed to the possession of perfectly developed tails by their descendants as proof positive of the non-inheritance of acquired characters, are no longer regarded as completely refuting the doctrines of Lamarck.

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essay has a very similar burden; he is at pains to show the crudities of the mechanistic view of life and to demonstrate the fallacies into which biologists have fallen by basing their arguments too frequently on form from which the idea of duration has been abstracted, thus regarding a living creature as a static object and forgetting that not a moment passes but the profoundest of changes occur in apparently the most stable of organs or tissues. Neo-Lamarckism, as he points out, "does not dispute the principles of Neo-Darwinism—it merely adds another to them," a statement with which we heartily agree, for, as he concludes, "the future of Darwinism is—Darwinism."

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In the pages of Mr. Gowen's "Outline History" one may enjoy a pageant of strange, powerful, and picturesque figures with something of their setting, and the large events to which their personalities ministered. Over the earlier portion of Japanese history—not merely the age of the most distant emperors with their almost scriptural longevity, but down to the Kamakura period, known to most people by reason of the extant enormous and stately figure of Buddha among the Kamakura pines—hangs a mild veil of legend and reverie. After the arrival of the Portuguese in 1542, with their first lessons in firearms (much appreciated by their pupils), facts multiply, faces appear, warts and all, action springs up and counteraction. The fickle attitude of

the great Shoguns (in our Elizabethan period) towards the followers of Xavier, culminating in the prodigious butchery of all detected Christians; the success of that manly sailor Will Adams as an imperial adviser; the effective edict of Iyemitsu in 1639—"Let none, so long as the Sun illuminates the world, presume to sail to Japan"; the fearless perseverance of eighteenth-century Japanese who felt that Japan's isolation was depriving her of the general human advance; solitary castaways who found themselves in the mysterious locked empire and survived; Commodore Perry and his epoch-making expedition of 1853 and 1854; the peculiar impressions of the first Japanese sent to Western cities; the great reconstitution of Japanese life prepared by Prince Ito—these are some of the points which make such a narrative as Mr. Gowen's, presented in so unassuming a style as his, stirring and compelling.

To the volume just characterized, that of Mr. Allen makes a capital companion or continuation. His endeavour has been to portray extensively the Japan evolved by the Nara and Heian rulers, the Hideyoshis, the Perrys, the Itos, and all the varying influences of native and foreign tradition. He has attacked a problem easily defeated in tea-party talk round about Tokyo, but in fact not easy, and shows as one uncommon qualification a matured regard for the Japanese way of reasoning and action (or inaction). His scheme comprises explanations of such subjects as the present character, political system, economic position, financial method, industrial and agricultural operation of Japan. The present reviewer, imperfectly equipped for judging most of these passages, agrees with the author very generally on more familiar ground; for Mr. Allen is alert to avoid the error of uncontrasted decisions. Japan is a duality, leading "a double life"; one may have seeming reason one minute for summarizing her sons as getting nowhere with smiles of self-approval, but the next moment one is struck by the restless critical zeal and sacrificial modesty of another type. Japan listens approvingly to Moonlight Sonatas by wireless, and then to the tingling clank of her own ancient instruments; she sits down in evening dress to a Parisian menu (do not investigate the epithet too far), and in kimono to the domestic rice and raw fish. She hails a taxi, or a kuruma; she applauds Colleen Moore's plaintive screen dilemmas, or her own beauties in scenes of horrific sword-play and moon-flowers. No wonder that she is a little confused; and the younger generation have humour to joke at their own bewilderments. But all this is fully and courteously examined in Mr. Allen's book.

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

ON THE EDITOR'S TABLE

THE eleventh volume of the L.C.C.'s Survey of London deals with "The Parish of Chelsea" (Batsford. £2 2s.).

Biographical works include: "Francis Joseph," by Eugene Bagge (Putnam. £1 1s.); "The Borgias," by Giuseppe Portigliotti (Allen & Unwin. 12s. 6d.); "The Ninth Lord Petre," by M. D. Petre (S.P.C.K. 10s. 6d.); "The Portledge Papers," edited by Russell J. Kerr and Ida Coffin Duncan (Cape. 12s. 6d.), which contains extracts from letters of Richard Laphorne and Richard Coffin, written between 1687 and 1697.

Travel books include: "Opals and Gold," by Robert M. Macdonald (Fisher Unwin. 10s. 6d.), which deals with mining and prospecting in Australia; "On Ancient Ways," by Lady Sybil Lubbock (Cape. 7s. 6d.), which tells of a winter journey in Egypt, Palestine, and Syria; "A Tour in Southern Asia," by Horace Bleackley (Bodley Head. 12s. 6d.), dealing with Indo-China, Malaya, Java, Sumatra, and Ceylon; "On the Trail of the Veiled Tuareg," by Dugald Campbell (Seeley Service. 21s.); "Dragon Lizards of Komodo," by W. Douglas Burden (Putnam. 15s.).

A new volume in "These Diversions" series is "Collecting," by Bohun Lynch (Jarrolds. 5s.).

An interesting and learned book is "A Book of French Wines," by P. Morton Shand (Knopf. 10s. 6d.).

"Blundell's," by F. J. Snell (Hutchinson. 18s.), is a history of the famous school in Devonshire.

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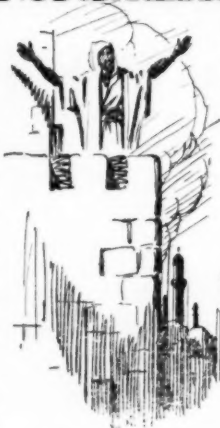


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THE OWNER-DRIVER

THE NEW ROVER "SIX"

AMIDST blizzards of blinding sleet "somewhere in the North," I am testing the new two-litre Rover "Six." The route is one the average motorist would shun like the plague at this season of the year, but it suits two enthusiasts who love plenty of breathing space and can laugh at gales and squalls.

We had an amusing experience yesterday. We ran across a deserted piece of road with a gentle rise—an ideal spot for a slow-running test on top gear—and let the Rover make its own speed without any assistance from the accelerator. We had reduced speed to a walking pace, but in spite of the gradient being against us the car *gained momentum!* It was uncanny to sit in the driving seat, with feet flat on the mat and hands in coat pockets, and feel the uncontrolled vehicle going steadily uphill. My companion got out whilst the Rover was moving and the wind nearly took him off his legs! There was sufficient air-pressure behind to have carried us many a mile! Half an hour later we took a wide sweep at about "40" and came up against a wind which almost instantly reduced the speed to the legal limit.

Such were the conditions under which the new Rover was put through its paces, but it didn't seem to mind a bit. It did all that a car of its size could be expected to do and with amazing celerity. I have driven many Rovers in the last fifteen years, but never one like this. The 16-h.p. engine is full of life and flexibility, and the steering so light that driving involves no fatigue whatever, even in a hilly district and under atrocious weather conditions.

The comfort of the fabric saloon is far above the ordinary. Lately I have been driving a powerful car with a big luxurious body—one with exceptional leg room—but the Rover is not one bit less comfortable. The width of the front seat is exceptional for a 16-h.p. saloon, and although both my companion and I were wearing thick overcoats we could have carried another front passenger without serious inconvenience. He would be a very tall man indeed who found reason to complain of insufficient leg room when the adjustable seat is pushed back, but even when the seat is set well back there is no shortage of space behind for three adults of ordinary height or girth.

I do not hesitate to say that although the engine and chassis are very attractive, the coachwork is going to be a big factor in the sale of this new model. Of the many 1928 cars I have had out for trial this is the most spacious and most comfortable body I have found yet on a "Light Six" chassis. The standard upholstery is moquette (leather is offered at £10 extra, by the way), and the interior appointments are complete to the last detail—a roof ventilator, ceiling net, roof light, rear window blind controlled from the driving seat, an ash tray in each of the rear doors, rug rail and door locks are all included, in addition to the dash fittings, which are generous in number and excellent in quality.

The Zenith 30 DHK carburettor, with two throttle bores and two complete sets of jets on each side of a single float chamber, is provided, and on the fascia board there are three carburettor controls. There is a slow-running device, an air strangler, and a control to regulate the strength of the mixture. All these are within the driver's reach, in addition to a petrol gauge.

Passing over rough by-roads we were impressed with the suspension of the car, but to make sure that the insulation from shocks was not confined to the front seat, I took a turn in the rear compartment and asked my companion to drive at speed over a road full of potholes. I know no car of the size and price that would have come through this test with greater credit.

The design of the Rover Six will commend itself to the man who does his own adjustments. There is heaps of room under the bonnet for the auxiliaries and everything is easy of access. The three-plate clutch, running in oil automatically supplied from the engine, is sweetness itself; gear-changing is ridiculously easy; the four-wheel braking system inspires the utmost confidence.

The fabric saloon, with fixed or folding head, at £425 (wire wheels £10 extra) is extraordinarily good value, and I like the car immensely. But personally I should like it still better if there were four speeds instead of three.

RAYNER ROBERTS.

Bona-fide readers of THE NATION may submit any of their motoring inquiries to our Motoring Correspondent for his comments and advice. They should be addressed: Rayner Roberts, THE NATION AND ATHENÆUM, 38, Great James Street, Bedford Row, London, W.C.1.

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FINANCIAL SECTION

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

THE RUBBER FRIGHT—THE TIN MYSTERY—THE SHILLING DEFERRED SHARE EVIL

MR. BALDWIN would be pained to hear the imprecations his name now evokes in the rubber market of the Stock Exchange. There is not a rubber share dealer who has not lost thousands of pounds on his "book" as a result of Mr. Baldwin's statement of February 8th on the rubber restriction scheme. This may seem strange to the world outside the City because the announcement merely stated that the Committee of Civil Research had been asked to advise whether the rubber restriction scheme should be continued in its present form, modified or removed. Why jump to the conclusion that the restriction scheme is to be removed entirely and at one stroke? Even if the Committee decided that the "restriction" was a failure, and ought to be removed, why should it not be removed gradually without injury to the rubber market? And what is to prevent the Rubber Growers' Association having a restriction scheme of their own, if they want one so badly, without any legislative sanction? These reflections should have prevented panic dealings either in the shares or the commodity.

There may have been some ground for complaint at the manner in which the Government's decision has been sprung upon the rubber industry. Stockbrokers are asking why Mr. Baldwin made this statement only eight days after the Colonial Office had announced that there was to be no change in the restriction scheme for the quarter beginning February 1st. Mincing Lane brokers contend that the news leaked over to New York on the afternoon of February 8th (the statement appeared in the Press on the morning of February 9th), so that American operators were able to sell rubber while they themselves were sleeping in their beds. We agree that the announcement should have been made from the Colonial Office on January 31st, when a decision of this kind—to appoint a committee of inquiry—would have been expected and probably welcomed. It has always been obvious that the rubber restriction scheme could not be a complete success while the Dutch growers refused to restrict with the British. But consider the effect on the Dutch grower if the restriction scheme is now entirely abolished. He would be faced with the loss of some of his newly won markets, and a selling price for his rubber perhaps of less than 1s. per lb. May not the abolition of legislative restriction in Malaya be sufficient to induce him to enter into a voluntary restriction of output with the British Rubber Growers' Association? This point is worth considering.

In any case why need rubber shareholders throw their shares upon the market merely because an impartial committee of inquiry is considering what is the best policy for the British rubber industry to adopt? There is no difference in profit for the investor if a rubber company sells 1,000,000 lb. at 1s. 6d. or 2,000,000 lb. at 9d., except that overhead charges would be lower in the latter case. Shareholders should also bear in mind that cheaper rubber may lead to bigger consumption and a reduction in the amount of rubber reclaimed in the United States, which is estimated to have been 190,000 tons last year or more than double the amount reclaimed in 1925. It is rather significant that the only big buyer of rubber shares at the "bargain" prices quoted in the panic this week when rubber fell to 1s. 8d. per lb. was said to be the broker of an American investment trust company.

From rubber the pessimist naturally turns to tin, which has suffered a severe slump in price without the trouble of any Downing Street statement or Colonial Office fiasco in restriction. In February, 1927, the cash price of tin was £320. At the moment of writing it is £227. The reaction began in September last, and apart from a recovery towards the end of November, prices have gone from bad to worse. The present slump is somewhat of a mystery. World production increased last year by about 7,000 tons to approximately 148,000 tons. Consumption is estimated to have increased by some 2,300 tons to 146,800 tons, so that the excess of supply was no more than 1,200 tons. There is the prospect this year of a further rise in output, but also of a further increase in consumption. Last year the United States consumed less tin largely because its motor industry turned out approximately 1,000,000 fewer motor vehicles than in 1926. This year, if the Ford plant gets to work according to programme, there should be a much bigger output of vehicles, and a larger consumption of tin. The present slump in prices seems to have been accentuated by "bear" operations, probably on the part of American interests. The available statistics do not warrant it.

The "shake-out" in the industrial share markets this week was not unexpected. We have referred to the signs of an unwieldy "bull" account having been built up in a number of industrial shares. Speculation has clearly been overdone in the 1s. shares of the newer film, gramophone, and artificial silk companies. Here are two examples of each class:—

British Brunswick 1s. Ordinary Shares	9s. 0d.
Crystalate Gramophone 1s. Ord. Shares	6s. 9d.
Bulmer Rayon 1s. Def. Ord. Shares ...	6s. 0d.
Cellulose Acetate Silk 1s. Shares ...	2s. 0d. (issue price)
British Instructional Films 1s. Shares	19s. 6d.
New Era National Pictures 1s. Shares	7s. 0d.

In most of these cases there is no information available to the public to justify the market valuation. Every one represents a sheer gamble. The trouble is that the public buys because it always follows a rise, and a rise is often engineered by market operators. The issue of 1s. deferred shares, representing a relatively small amount of capital, makes it easy for a group of speculators to form a "pool" in the shares and to make the price of the shares what they will. This reduces the activities of the Stock Exchange to a farce. There is no longer in effect a free market. We suggest that the Committee of the Stock Exchange should inquire into any case where "pool" operations are suspected and suspend dealings in the shares if manipulation is proved.

There is another evil inherent in the issue of 1s. deferred shares to which the TIMES has rightly drawn attention. The occasion was the issue of 950,000 ordinary shares of £1, and 950,000 deferred shares of 1s. (£47,500) by the Cellulose Acetate Silk Company, an offshoot of the Non-Inflammable Film Company. Many industrial issues lately have taken the form of a large block of ordinary or preference shares, providing the bulk of the capital required, and a small block of deferred shares retaining the control and an undue proportion of the profits. As the TIMES remarked, it is an accepted canon of company finance that those who take the chief risk in any enterprise should be entitled to the chief reward. In the case of the Cellulose Acetate Silk only about 38 per cent. of the prospectus profit would accrue to the ordinary capital: the balance would go to the deferred shareholders, who would thus obtain a yield of 272½ per cent. on their nominal capital. This is a scandalous type of company finance that ought to be made impossible. The public should refuse to apply for shares which take all the risks of the trade and carry only a minor proportion of the profits and votes.

